

**FIFA®**

FIFA WORLD CUP 2034™  
**BID EVALUATION  
REPORT**



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# INTRODUCTION

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## FOREWORD

In the earliest days of organised football, the sport was based on club football and born as a national movement. Over the course of the next 150 years, it gradually became more and more continental, and in recent years, it has been our declared goal at FIFA, as the world game's governing body, to contribute to developing football in all corners of the world. It is our mission to ensure that all of our members and the players, fans and officials who hold a stake in football in their country have a level playing field to shine on the global stage.

It is with this mission in mind and with the intention of securing the best possible hosting conditions for each edition of the FIFA World Cup™ that the FIFA Council decided upon the principle of confederation rotation. With the FIFA World Cup 2026™ in Canada, Mexico and the United States; the Centenary Celebration in Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay (subject to approval by the FIFA Congress); the FIFA World Cup 2030™ in Morocco, Portugal and Spain (subject to approval by the FIFA Congress); and the invitation to the AFC and OFC member associations to bid for the FIFA World Cup 2034™, every continent of the world was given the opportunity to host the FIFA World Cup over an eight-year cycle.

The ensuing bid from AFC member Saudi Arabia to host the 2034 edition can be placed within the context of its own global vision. Saudi Arabia has in recent years been working to transform its socioeconomic landscape by expanding opportunities for growth and fostering greater global integration. The Kingdom is leveraging its pivotal role in the Arab and Islamic worlds, its strong investment capabilities and its strategic geographical position to create a vibrant environment for both local and international investors and establish itself as a global leader. In footballing terms, too, Saudi Arabia has been playing an increasingly important role in football development. It has taken great steps to grow the game at every level, from grassroots and women's football to intercontinental club competition, for example by staging an outstanding FIFA Club World Cup 2023™.

Whether evaluating bids to host the FIFA World Cup within a competitive process between multiple bidders or, as in this case, when it comes to evaluating a single bid, the task for FIFA remains the same: to assess how successfully a bidder has met every aspect of the hosting requirements and provide our conclusions on that bidder's commitment and readiness to host the competition. As during the bidding process for the FIFA World Cup 2030, which was held concurrently, we have worked diligently to fulfil this task. The members of the FIFA administration assessing the bid were appointed due to their knowledge and experience in different aspects of hosting the FIFA World Cup, and they have worked as a team to ensure that this report represents our combined best efforts to scrutinise the bid based on the facts for the benefit of the FIFA Congress and the entire football community.

We have greatly appreciated the warm welcome and cooperation we have received from the bid representatives in Saudi Arabia during our dialogue and visits. At all stages of the bidding process, they have shown a notably high level of commitment to fulfilling all of the hosting requirements and the discussions have been conducted at all times in an open and collaborative manner.

We trust that you will deem we have performed our evaluation with the necessary objectivity, rigour and transparency and laid the foundation for a 2034 edition of the FIFA World Cup that showcases and celebrates football's truly global dimensions.

Yours faithfully,



**Mattias Grafström**  
FIFA Secretary General







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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## 2.1 CONCLUSION AND KEY OBSERVATIONS

### Introduction

Pursuant to Section 6.4 of the Bidding Regulations, the FIFA administration has prepared this summary of key findings in accordance with the regulatory framework of the bidding process.

A critical aspect of FIFA's role is to indicate the manner and extent to which the bid fulfils the tournament requirements, so as to secure the best possible hosting conditions in the host country and thereby further develop the unique status of the FIFA World Cup as the biggest sporting competition in the world.

Since this report serves to support an informed decision-making process by the members of the FIFA Council and the delegates of the FIFA Congress, it is the duty of FIFA to highlight its key observations relating to the evaluation of the bid, which will also facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the bid. These observations incorporate not only the technical scoring of the bid, but also a thorough assessment of the perceived risks, as well as potential opportunities and challenges. The assessments of each of the components reviewed have also taken full account of the incremental increase in quality that is expected of FIFA's flagship event from one edition to the next. The tables set out on the following pages are designed to provide an overview of the most pertinent statistics, overall risk evaluations and technical scores (for each of the components that were scored) in relation to the bid.

### Key observations

The bid submitted by Saudi Arabia presents a unique, innovative and ambitious vision for the "next century" of FIFA World Cups. The bid embodies a balanced blend of the Kingdom's rich cultural heritage together with its ongoing initiatives to expand and reform, a key cornerstone and foundation of which is its national strategic project: Vision 2030.

First and foremost, the Saudi Arabia bid for the FIFA World Cup 2034 presents a very strong all-round proposition, reflected in the results of the technical evaluation, which assesses the proposed infrastructure (both sporting and general) as well as its commercial potential. The bid proposes a portfolio of new, state-of-the-art infrastructure blending what is industry leading with novel elements, in some cases even exploring new terrain in terms of design and how stakeholders interact with the competition. From a commercial standpoint, the bid provides a very good financial platform, based on a combination of competitive revenue potential and clear cost efficiencies. Critically, the demonstrable commitment to the bid by stakeholders at all levels in Saudi Arabia, ranging from government to the private sector, is clearly evident and ensures a strong legal framework for seamlessly and successfully organising the FIFA World Cup in ten years' time.

A key element of the bid's forward-looking concept is the prominence of planned infrastructure as part of the bid's proposed tournament footprint. Given the scale of these projects, should the bid be successful, it will be important to work closely together to ensure they are successfully realised, providing guidance and support where needed. However, it is important to highlight that the comprehensive and detailed plans developed by the bidder, supported by substantial concrete commitments from the relevant stakeholders as referenced above, are relevant as mitigating factors and generally provide FIFA with a high degree of confidence. It is also relevant to emphasise that many of the projects are integrated into the broader modernisation initiatives, whilst at the same time linked to carefully considered legacy objectives, both of which are being anchored in and propelled by Vision 2030.



There are some natural constraints to consider as part of the potential event timing which requires further consideration. In that respect, FIFA is encouraged by the bidder's intent to collaborate and work closely with FIFA and its key stakeholders, while further signalling its flexibility to facilitate the hosting of the tournament during the most appropriate timeframe.

Another area which obviously requires due attention is the assessment of the potential human rights risks associated with the competition. On this matter, Professor John G. Ruggie's report from April 2016, entitled "For the Game. For the World: FIFA and Human Rights" ("The Ruggie Report") – which was the genesis for the significant reforms that FIFA has implemented on this topic – provides important direction on how FIFA should approach its evaluation of bids. Notably, Recommendation 3.2, which called for the inclusion of human rights within its criteria for evaluating bids to host tournaments, states: "This is about making decisions based on evidence of how effectively bidders intend to address human rights risks connected with a tournament. It is not about peremptorily excluding countries based on their general human rights context". Therefore, in its assessment, FIFA has consulted various sources, including the bidder's human rights strategy, the mandated context assessment, as well as direct commitments from the host country and host cities, together with all contractual hosting documents, all of which notably contain provisions relating to respecting human rights in connection with the competition.

The conclusion of this analysis is that, whilst implementing the various measures outlined in the Human Rights Strategy could involve significant effort and time, the substantial efforts that went into preparing the human rights-related submissions of the bid as well as the concrete commitments made by the bid and all local stakeholders do provide a foundation from which all parties can work together constructively to develop mechanisms to address those risks. Moreover, in view of the significant ten-year timeframe for implementation and the rate of progress seen in recent years, it is believed that there is good potential for the tournament to serve as a catalyst for some of the ongoing and future reforms, and contribute to positive human rights outcomes for people in Saudi Arabia and the region that go beyond the scope of the tournament itself.

Taking all aspects into consideration, the bidder has clearly demonstrated Saudi Arabia's capacity to successfully host the FIFA World Cup 2034. Should the bid be successful, FIFA looks forward to working together with the appointed host from the outset to deliver a world-class and memorable edition of the FIFA World Cup, leaving an important and far-reaching legacy for football and its global community.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the results of the technical evaluation, the Saudi Arabia bid received an average score of 4.2 out of 5.

On the basis of the above results, as well as the complete bid evaluation (as set out in detail in section 5 of this report), FIFA has determined that the bid qualifies for consideration by the FIFA Council and the FIFA Congress, due to having exceeded the minimum hosting requirements in the FIFA World Cup 2034 technical evaluation.

















The bid may therefore be considered by the FIFA Council for submission to the FIFA Congress ahead of the selection of the host of the FIFA World Cup 2034.

## Overview of key information

Host cities	
Number of host cities proposed	5
Stadiums	
Number of stadiums proposed	15
Stadiums proposed for opening match	King Salman International Stadium, Riyadh
Stadiums proposed for final	King Salman International Stadium, Riyadh
Team facilities	
Number of team base camp pairings proposed	72
Number of referee base camp pairings proposed	2
Number of venue-specific pairings proposed	60
International Broadcast Centre (IBC) sites	
Cities proposed for hosting IBC	Riyadh
Competition-related event sites	
Cities proposed for Final Draw, FIFA Congress and Team Workshop	NEOM, Riyadh, AlUla
Timing	
Event period proposed by bid	To be defined
Time zone(s)	UTC+3

## Overall risk assessment

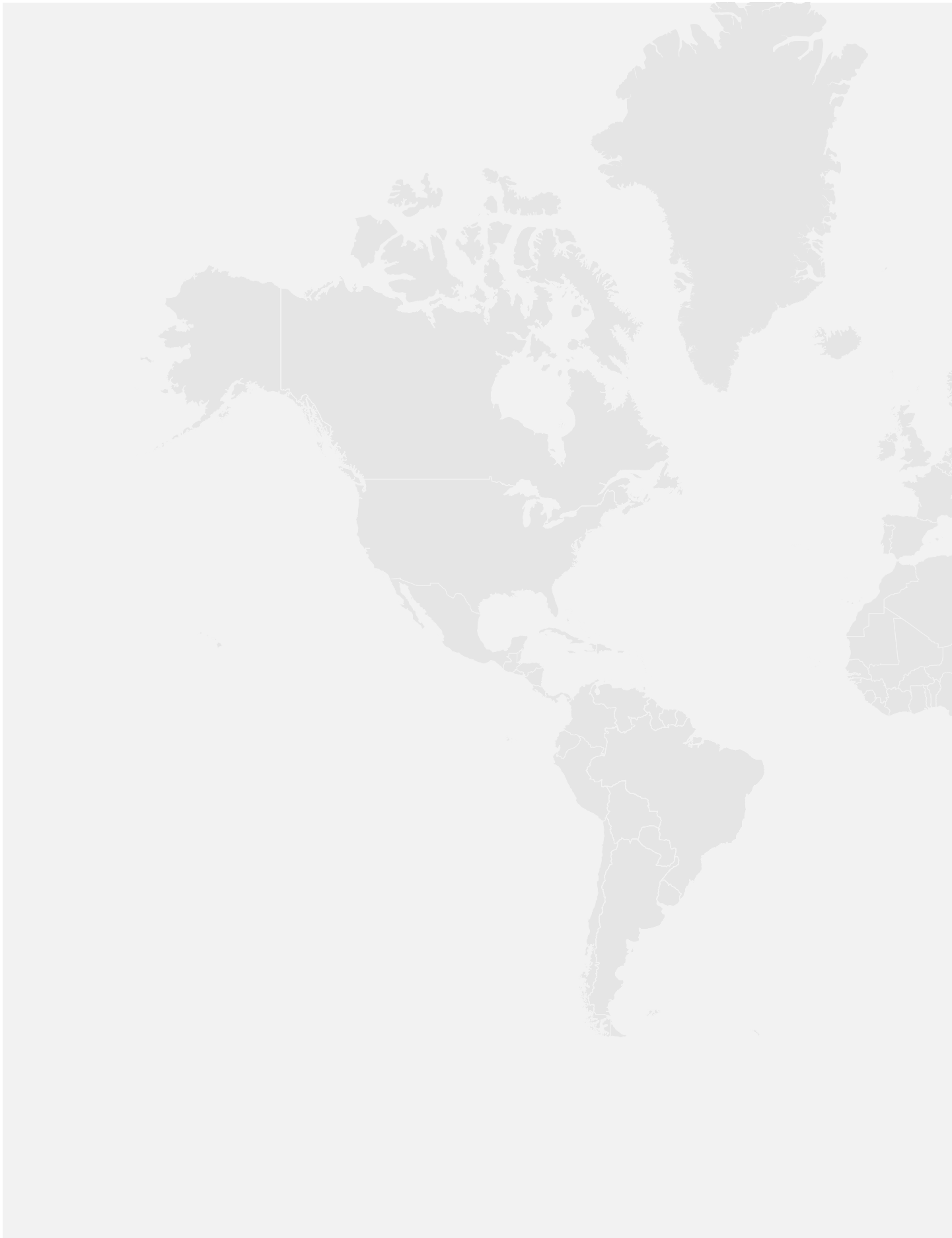
The charts below presents the overall risk assessments that have been applied to each of the assessed criteria, ranging from low risk (green) to high risk (red). More information on these assessments can be found in the individual evaluation section.

Infrastructure	
Stadiums	 Medium
Team and referee facilities	 Low
Accommodation	 Medium
IBC sites	 Low
FIFA Fan Festival™ sites	 Low
Competition-related event sites	 Low
Commercial	
Commercial	 Low
Legal and compliance	
Legal: government support documents	 Low
Legal: contractual framework	 Low
Compliance	 Low
Event services	
Transport	 Medium
Safety and security	 Low
Health, medical and anti-doping	 Low
IT&T	 Low
Human rights and sustainability	
Sustainable event management	 Low
Human rights	 Medium
Environmental protection	 Low
Event vision and key metrics	
Event timing	 Medium

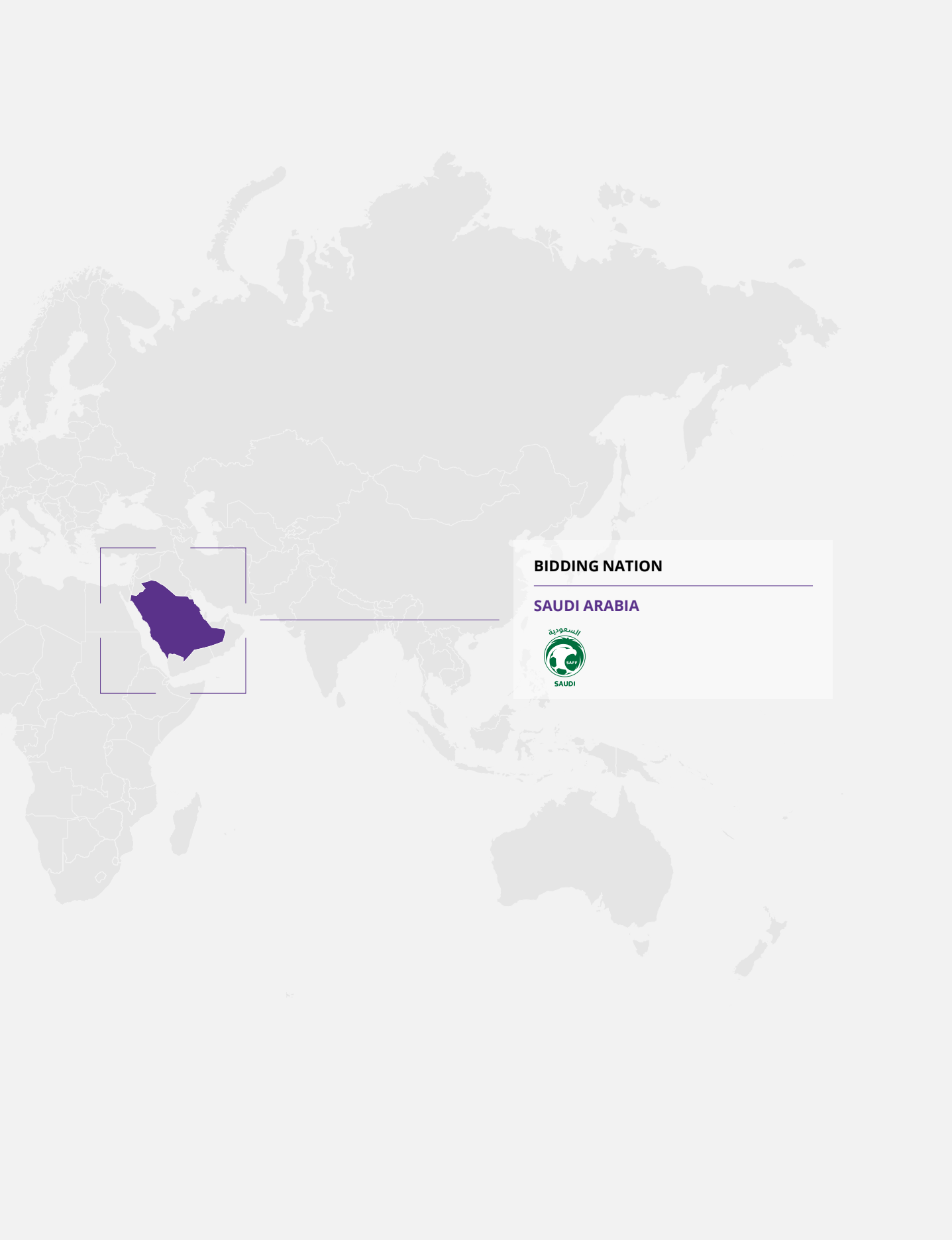
The charts below present the overall technical scores that were awarded to the bid (covering infrastructure and commercial components). Each component is scored on a scale of “0” to “5” (where “0” represents “does not meet the requirements” and “5” represents “very good”), with the weightings for each component also indicated.

### Summary of technical scoring

Criterion	Overall score	Core minimum requirements met?	Weight (%)	Weighted average score
Infrastructure				
Stadiums	4.1	✓	35%	143.5
Team and referee facilities	3.9	✓	10%	39.0
Accommodation	4.1	✓	7.5%	30.8
Transport	4.2	✓	7.5%	31.5
IBC sites	4.7	✓	5%	23.5
FIFA Fan Festival™ sites	3.9	✓	5%	19.5
Commercial				
Commercial	4.4	✓	30%	132.0
TOTAL (out of 500)				419.8
Overall average score (out of 5)				<b>4.2</b>







**BIDDING NATION**

**SAUDI ARABIA**



## 2.2 SAUDI ARABIA 2034 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The FIFA administration has carried out an evaluation of the Saudi Arabia bid to assess its suitability to host the FIFA World Cup 2034. The findings of the full evaluation are covered in section 5, while detailed scoring of the bid's technical elements can be found in Annexe A. A summary of the main findings is presented below.

### Hosting vision and strategy

Saudi Arabia presents a hosting vision which it believes can unite, inspire and reach every corner of the world in a way that honours, enhances and grows the global game. Its vision revolves around the bid slogan '*Growing Together*' and is subdivided into the three sections '*Growing People. Together*', '*Growing Football. Together*' and '*Growing Connections. Together*'. As the bidder explains, this vision is part of the Kingdom's national strategic project, Vision 2030, a historic country-wide effort to unlock a future of economic growth and social development for all, building on the three key pillars of a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation.

The bidder has set out a very clear and well-structured hosting concept that carefully takes into account both the development of football within its own borders and the impact its development activities could have on the wider footballing community. In particular, the bidder has aligned its vision closely with the strategic objectives for the global game set out by FIFA. The clarity of the concept and the level of detail presented provides reassurance that hosting the tournament in Saudi Arabia would create further opportunities for the country's population to participate in football as well as propel the country's transformation to the benefit of other stakeholder groups in its society.

### Legacy

The Kingdom's bid to host the tournament is integrated in its wide-reaching Vision 2030 project to transform the nation and its society as a whole. Accordingly, the Saudi Arabian Football Federation (the "Federation"), the government and all stakeholders have committed to ensuring that the tournament would deliver lasting benefits in terms of football, infrastructure and society.

The bidder's efforts to develop the game in Saudi Arabia span four main areas: the elite men's game, the elite and wider women's game, youth football and grassroots football. In the elite men's game, the priorities are to deliver success for the national team, support the transformation of the Saudi Pro League, and grow football by building international connections. In the women's game, Saudi Arabia has made significant strides in developing interest and grassroots participation for women and girls, and at the elite level, it has established two leagues, registered more than 1,000 players and seen its women's team secure its first successes. In youth football, the country has launched a national scouting scheme and committed to create 25 regional training centres. Moreover, the Federation has continued to expand awareness, competitions and education programmes to spark greater interest in football at a grassroots level.

Looking outside its own national borders, the bidder wants to collaborate with member associations worldwide to grow the game and plans to launch a research institute to foster football exchanges and development.

Map of the bidding country including proposed host cities



Saudi Arabia also intends to use its bid as part of Vision 2030 to significantly improve its sporting infrastructure, by refurbishing and constructing new stadiums as part of city development programmes that support the growth of football and the wider entertainment industry. The bidder states that these investments would yield economic and social value for years to come, using innovative and sustainable technologies to ensure their continued suitability for football and other events. An anchor tenant and a main legacy use have been identified for all the stadiums.

As the close alignment between the bidder's legacy objectives and its national Vision 2030 project suggest, its aspiration extends beyond football to the ongoing transformation of the nation itself. The proposals set out in the bid book align well with FIFA's strategic objectives to develop youth football, drive further development in women's football, and focus on player and coach development.

## **Stadiums**

The Saudi Arabia bid proposes 15 stadiums across five proposed host cities, slightly above the minimum number of 14 stadiums required to host the competition.

The Saudi Arabia bid contains a range of impressive stadiums which, when built or refurbished, could offer state-of-the-art infrastructure centre-stage for hosting FIFA World Cup matches. It is evident from the information submitted that the bidder has considered the legacy uses of each stadium, whilst at the same time carefully factoring in the requirements for hosting FIFA World Cup matches into the stadium designs and plans. This balanced approach ensures that the proposed stadiums could provide a lasting benefit, whilst at the same time maximising the experience for all stakeholders, including teams, fans and other guests.

Of these 15 stadiums, eight are planned new-builds, including the King Salman International Stadium, which is proposed as the venue for the opening match and final. Another three stadiums are currently under construction and will host the AFC Asian Cup in 2027. The bid includes stadium projects integrated into unique locations, including the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium, located within the Qiddiya development, and NEOM Stadium, located within THE LINE development. Moreover, there are stadiums such as New Murabba Stadium and ROSHN Stadium whose extended roof structures and footprints blend into the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The bidder's high ambition for innovation, together with the overall scale of the stadium projects, creates a slightly elevated risk profile. Therefore it is important that, if the bid is successful, the bidder and FIFA work closely together from the very outset of each project to ensure that they can be delivered successfully and efficiently. In this respect, the ten-year lead time for planning the competition is significant to note as a mitigating factor. Indeed, some stadium projects have already commenced (with a view to hosting the AFC Asian Cup 2027). It is also worth noting that FIFA has worked closely with each bidder during the bid preparation phase of both the FIFA World Cup 2030 and 2034 bidding processes – including multiple country visits as well as virtual and in-person workshops, to share FIFA's feedback, where appropriate, on the plans presented. Finally, it is important to note that the stadium authorities of all proposed stadiums have executed the stadium agreements that contractually commit and bind the parties to delivering the venues in accordance with the hosting requirements.

On the basis that FIFA and the bidder will continue this dialogue with the same constructive and positive spirit as evident throughout the bidding process, the overall bid can be assessed as offering very good stadium proposals for hosting the FIFA World Cup.

### Team and referee facilities

The Saudi Arabia bid has proposed a comprehensive set of accommodation options, comprising 72 team base camp hotels, two referee base camp hotels and 60 venue-specific hotels. All hotels are paired with a training site. In total, the bid therefore contains 134 team and referee facility pairings.

The analysis of the documentation provided suggests that the proposed hotels are of a good standard and the training sites are of a very good standard. This was generally confirmed through the on-site visits that took place during the course of the bidding process.

Whilst a proportion of the hotels and training sites are planned to or will undergo renovations and upgrades, the strong commitment to providing such properties (in terms of designs, funding, contracting, legacy plans, etc.), together with the substantial lead-in time, significantly mitigate any material risks in relation to the timely delivery of such infrastructure. Nevertheless, it is important that the various projects are jointly monitored from initialisation through to completion to ensure world-class facilities for teams and referees.

Based on the bid documentation, the site visits and the detailed plans presented, the hotels and training sites proposed for teams and referees largely meet the requirements and would be suitable for the competition.

### Accommodation

Based on the information provided and the site visits conducted, the accommodation inventory proposed by the bid would appear to meet or exceed the requirements, with a wide variety of good options to cater for all types of tournament stakeholders. In addition, the bidder has contractually secured the commitment of an extensive portfolio of hotel properties (which already provides cover and serves as a very strong framework for the planning of the competition).

The overall scale of the planned inventory proposed across the host cities and the compact footprint – which further increases the peak demand for accommodation in some key cities (e.g. Riyadh and Jeddah) – creates a slightly elevated risk profile. That said, the clear plans and commitments already in place and the ten-year lead time for planning the competition are significant to note as mitigating factors.

### Transport

The bid sets out transport infrastructure plans to expand airports, introduce high-speed rail and enhance public transport.

From an international accessibility standpoint, based on concrete plans that foresee an increase in the capacity of the airports in the proposed host cities in the years leading up to 2034, the level of international accessibility would be very good. Saudi Arabia will have in place modern international airports with significant passenger traffic capacity, with the cities of Riyadh and Jeddah likely serving as the key hubs.

In terms of intercity connectivity, the bid is bolstered by its compact tournament footprint, albeit with a reliance on air travel. Overall, the mobility plans in the proposed host cities appear to be adequate and one important consideration will be managing the foreseen expansion in public transport infrastructure while the stadiums are in the planning phase, which can add complexity but at the same time present opportunities to optimise operations.

When it comes to host city mobility, extensive enhancements to public transport infrastructure are foreseen, such as the launch of the new metro system in Riyadh. The compact footprint, with multiple stadiums in Riyadh and Jeddah, brings an added level of potential complexity that would require consideration and careful planning.



Due to the overall scale of the various transport-related projects, as well as the novel designs in some cases, there is a slightly elevated risk profile. However, the quality and thoroughness of the plans developed and presented, the substantial government commitment to these projects, the strong team in place to support their delivery, and the substantial lead time for planning the competition, mitigate this risk substantially and provide a high degree of confidence.

### **International Broadcast Centre**

The Saudi Arabia bid proposes two options for hosting the International Broadcast Centre (IBC): the Qiddiya Creative District and the Riyadh Exhibition and Conference Centre, both of which are located in Riyadh. It would appear that both proposed venues would meet the key requirements for hosting the IBC, pending successful completion of construction work as planned by 2034. As part of the bid, formal commitments to host the IBC sites were provided by both venues in the form of a signed IBC venue agreement.

### **Competition-related event sites**

The bidder has proposed one venue each for hosting the Final Draw, a FIFA Congress and the Team Workshop.

For each of the three competition-related events, the bidder has proposed large-scale venues equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, which are likely to meet the respective requirements in each case. Given that the bidder has proposed a venue for the Final Draw which has not yet been built, the progress of construction would have to be monitored carefully.

### **FIFA Fan Festival™ sites**

The Saudi Arabia bid has proposed ten potential sites, including two for each of its five proposed host cities.

Overall, the bid has proposed a good variety of sites which would generally be suitable for hosting a FIFA Fan Festival at the FIFA World Cup 2034. The proposals address the requirements for site capacity, location, security and quality.

Of the ten venues proposed, five already exist while five are still in the planning phase. For this reason, if the bid was successful, further analysis would be required to determine the suitability and operational configuration of these venues, although it is FIFA's assessment that solutions could be identified if necessary.

### **Commercial**

FIFA's overall organising costs were calculated to be below the baseline (by approximately USD 450 million) if the tournament were hosted in Saudi Arabia. Key cost drivers identified include TV operations (USD 378.4 million), workforce management (USD 273.8 million), transport (USD 124.0 million), team services (USD 111.1 million) and IT&T (USD 99.5 million). When compared to the bid, deltas are driven by competitive price levels and positively impact upon areas such as technical services (USD 133.0 million below the baseline), safety and security (USD 58.9 million below the baseline) and IT&T (USD 43.3 million below the baseline). In short, virtually all cost drivers are currently forecast as being below the baseline, with some cost items, such as staffing costs, event transport, team accommodation and competition management generally expected to remain in line with baseline levels.

When it comes to revenue, the media and marketing rights value of the bid was forecast to result in a growth in the global live TV audience of roughly 10% when measured against the upcoming edition. For ticketing and hospitality, FIFA forecasts gross revenues exceeding the estimated baseline by approximately 32% (equating to more than USD 240 million), broadly driven by the substantial hospitality footprint proposed by the bid (where in some cases

a cap of 25% was applied to reflect a more suitable split between general admission and hospitality). In addition, FIFA evaluated other venue-related revenues such as licensing and retail as well as food and beverage. For revenues relating to licensing and retail, the assessment was split based on on-site, online and licensing revenue streams. The bid was forecast to slightly outperform the baseline (by approximately USD 7 million) on all licensing and retail revenue streams due to favourable results expected in particular for on-site and online sales. For food and beverage, the bid is forecast to perform comparable to the baseline.

In summary, based on the analysis conducted, the bid is expected to perform strongly, in particular driven by high-quality venues with substantial premium offerings. In conjunction with a tournament budget that is assessed as being substantially below the baseline, FIFA believes the bid presents a strong commercial position.

### **Safety and security**

Saudi Arabia has put forward a framework and foundation that would allow for the development and implementation of a safety and security strategy that meets the requirements. Commendably, the country demonstrates a strong commitment to investing in establishing lasting benefits for public safety in Saudi Arabia. This includes cybersecurity as well as physical security technology and equipment.

Saudi Arabia also offers robust counterterrorism capabilities to mitigate the risk of a terrorist attack.

The country has a track record of successfully delivering sporting events. Given the scale of the FIFA World Cup and the development of new stadiums not yet operationalised, investment in capacity building and testing could be focus areas in the planning of the competition.

### **Health, medical and anti-doping**

From the perspective of health and medical services, the Saudi Arabia bid meets the requirements. The overall standards of medical care and of the providers and facilities are high. The country has vast experience with mass gatherings, an established emergency care system, medical facilities of a high standard, and plans to expand its sports medicine services. Saudi Arabia also has experience of providing FIFA-standard services to teams and guests from the FIFA Club World Cup 2023. Regarding climatic conditions and temperatures, see section 5.3.5 Event Timing.

No major infectious disease or other public health threats exist at this point. There are no specific vaccination requirements beyond the usual recommendations for travellers.

Finally, regarding anti-doping measures, the bid has confirmed its compliance with the requirements set by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

### **IT&T**

The Saudi Arabia bid describes a very good level of international connectivity in general, as well as candidate host cities that are well connected to telecommunications services and generally have up-to-date mobile coverage. In 2023, the Kingdom was ranked among the top 10 countries worldwide in mobile internet speed.

The existing stadiums have good IT&T infrastructure and comply with the requirements. While information about the planned infrastructure in the stadiums that will be constructed (or upgraded) is limited at this early stage, assurances have been made in the government guarantee relating to IT&T that the requirements would be met.

## Event timing

When it comes to the timing of the competition, the bidder does not stipulate a proposed window but rather pledges that it will prioritise collaboration with FIFA and its stakeholders to ensure the tournament's success, factoring in a number of considerations ranging from climatic conditions to the schedule of football and other sporting and cultural events locally and globally. This is important given that the FIFA Men's International Match Calendar has yet to be defined through to 2034, when the competition would take place.

In light of the climatic conditions and the calendar of football and other key sports and cultural events locally set out in the information provided by the bidder, the bid has been assessed as presenting an elevated risk in terms of event timing. Nevertheless, the substantial lead-in time to arrive at a Men's International Match Calendar for 2034 and the flexibility and spirit of collaboration demonstrated by the bidder serve as partially mitigating factors.

## Sustainability, human rights and environmental protection

The Saudi Arabia 2034 bid provides a good overall commitment to sustainability. It makes an explicit commitment to sustainability, human rights, sustainable procurement, climate action and to complying with FIFA's sustainability requirements. The bidder also confirms its support for the Paris Agreement and for implementation of the ISO 20121 sustainability management system for events.

In terms of human rights, overall, the undertaking involved in implementing the various measures outlined in the Human Rights Strategy, particularly in certain areas, could involve significant effort and time, giving rise to a risk rating in this regard that has been reflected in the assessment accordingly. That said, FIFA recognises the substantial efforts that went into preparing the human rights-related submissions of the bid as well as the concrete commitments made by the bid and all local stakeholders. This provides the foundation from which FIFA, together with its local partners, would work to develop systems to address risks associated with the tournament should the bid be successful. There too, the ten-year timeframe for implementation as well as the rate of progress seen in past years are relevant considerations.

Moreover, it is important to note that the bid involves significant opportunities for positive human rights impact. The bid places the tournament preparation and delivery in the context of the country's wider reform agenda under Vision 2030 and includes several commitments related to these reforms. There is good potential that the tournament could serve as a catalyst for some of the ongoing and future reforms and contribute to positive human rights outcomes for people in Saudi Arabia and the region that go beyond the scope of the tournament itself.

Finally, whilst the extent of construction would have a material environmental impact, the bid provides a good foundation for delivering mitigation measures to address some of the environment-related challenges, in particular through the national legislative context, the commitment to working with FIFA to implement a sustainable event management system, sustainable building certification, the compact tournament footprint, the provision of free public transportation to ticket holders, the maximisation of the use of renewable energy in connection with the tournament, and by covering all areas outlined in the FIFA Sustainable Tournament Requirements.

### Legal and compliance

Overall, the respective government entities have provided FIFA with an extensive and generally compliant set of government support documents, which creates a very good framework for the successful delivery of the competition.

Likewise, from a contractual perspective, the Federation and its stakeholders have provided an extensive and generally compliant set of contractual hosting documents, which creates a very good legal framework for the successful hosting of the competition

When it comes to compliance with the bidding process, at the time that this report was finalised, the bidder was assessed as having complied with the bidding process. FIFA also identified no relevant international economic sanctions in place against Saudi Arabia. FIFA will work closely with the appointed hosts to develop and implement a robust compliance programme to ensure mitigation of all relevant compliance risks and to support the protection of the tournament's integrity.









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# OVERVIEW OF THE BIDDING PROCESS

## 3.1 BACKGROUND

### Targeted invitations to enhance rotation and stability

On 4 October 2023, the FIFA Council approved the start of the bidding process for the FIFA World Cup 2034, which it announced would be conducted concurrently with the 2030 edition and would be limited to the member associations of the confederations of the AFC and the OFC. The bidding process was launched the next day, 5 October 2023, with member associations given until 31 October 2023 to submit confirmations of interest. FIFA received a single declaration of interest, from the Federation, which duly submitted its final bid by the deadline of 31 July 2024.

### A thorough, well-founded process

The evaluation model developed by FIFA for the FIFA World Cup 2034 bidding process is fit for purpose, using the highly successful FIFA World Cup 2026 bidding process as a foundation. The evaluation focuses on the defined priority areas of the event vision and key metrics, infrastructure, services, commercial aspects, and sustainability and human rights. Moreover, the FIFA administration is committed to ensuring that all aspects of the bidding process are conducted in accordance with the following principles:



#### Objectivity

The evaluation of the bid is designed to treat each bidder fairly and equally. The bid is assessed by experts in each aspect of the bidding process and measured against clear and objective criteria.



#### Transparency

The entire bidding process for the FIFA World Cup 2034 is being conducted in a manner of utmost transparency, with all the main documents and guidelines related to the process being made publicly available online. An overview of the bidding process, detailing the high-level hosting requirements and evaluation method, was published on FIFA.com in October 2023. The Bid Evaluation Report (this document) and the bid book produced by the bidding member association have also been made available on FIFA.com. If, at the conclusion of the ongoing bid evaluation process (when FIFA publishes this Bid Evaluation Report), the bid is assessed as having met the minimum hosting requirements according to the results of the technical evaluation, it will be eligible for submission to the FIFA Congress. The selection of the host of the FIFA World Cup 2034 will take place at the Extraordinary FIFA Congress that will be held virtually on Wednesday, 11 December 2024. As the foundation for this bidding process was the unanimous approval by the FIFA Council, the decision on the host will also be taken en bloc.



#### Integrity

All of the stakeholders involved in the bidding process for the FIFA World Cup 2034 – including the FIFA administration, the decision-making bodies and the bidding member association – are subject to the FIFA Code of Ethics. Additionally, an independent auditor is appointed to monitor the bidding process.



#### Commitment to human rights and sustainable event management

FIFA is fully committed to conducting its activities in connection with the bidding for and hosting of the final competition of the FIFA World Cup 2034 in accordance with sustainable event management standards and practices (in line with ISO 20121), safeguarding principles for the protection of children and adults at risk, and to respecting internationally recognised human rights in accordance with the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.



## Two-stage assessment

The bid will have to pass two distinct stages in order to be selected as host of the FIFA World Cup 2034.

Firstly, its hosting credentials will be assessed within this Bid Evaluation Report, which includes risk assessments, technical evaluations and expert appraisals for all of the key bid components. A material failure by the bidder for the FIFA World Cup 2034 to comply with the minimum hosting requirements within the technical evaluation section will lead to the bid being excluded from the bidding process.

If, at the conclusion of the ongoing bid evaluation process, the bid is assessed as having met the minimum hosting requirements according to the results of the technical evaluation, it will then be eligible for submission to the FIFA Congress for the final selection decision.

## Protecting the integrity of the bidding process

FIFA takes stringent measures to safeguard the integrity of the process from start to finish. Each of the stakeholders involved in the process, including members of the FIFA Council, delegates of the FIFA Congress, members of the FIFA administration and representatives of all FIFA member associations, are governed by the rigorous Bid Rules of Conduct.

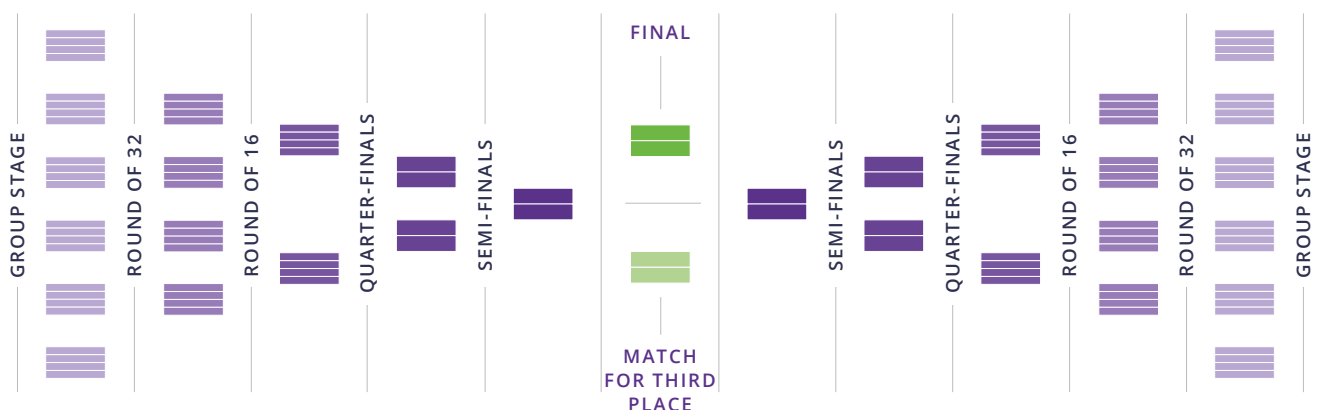
Among other measures, the Bid Rules of Conduct stipulate:

- the obligation to always apply basic ethical principles such as integrity, responsibility, trustworthiness and fairness;
- the prohibition of offering or accepting inappropriate gifts;
- the prohibition of any form of unfair collaboration or collusion between member associations;
- strict rules in relation to proposals for football development projects and the organisation of friendly matches.

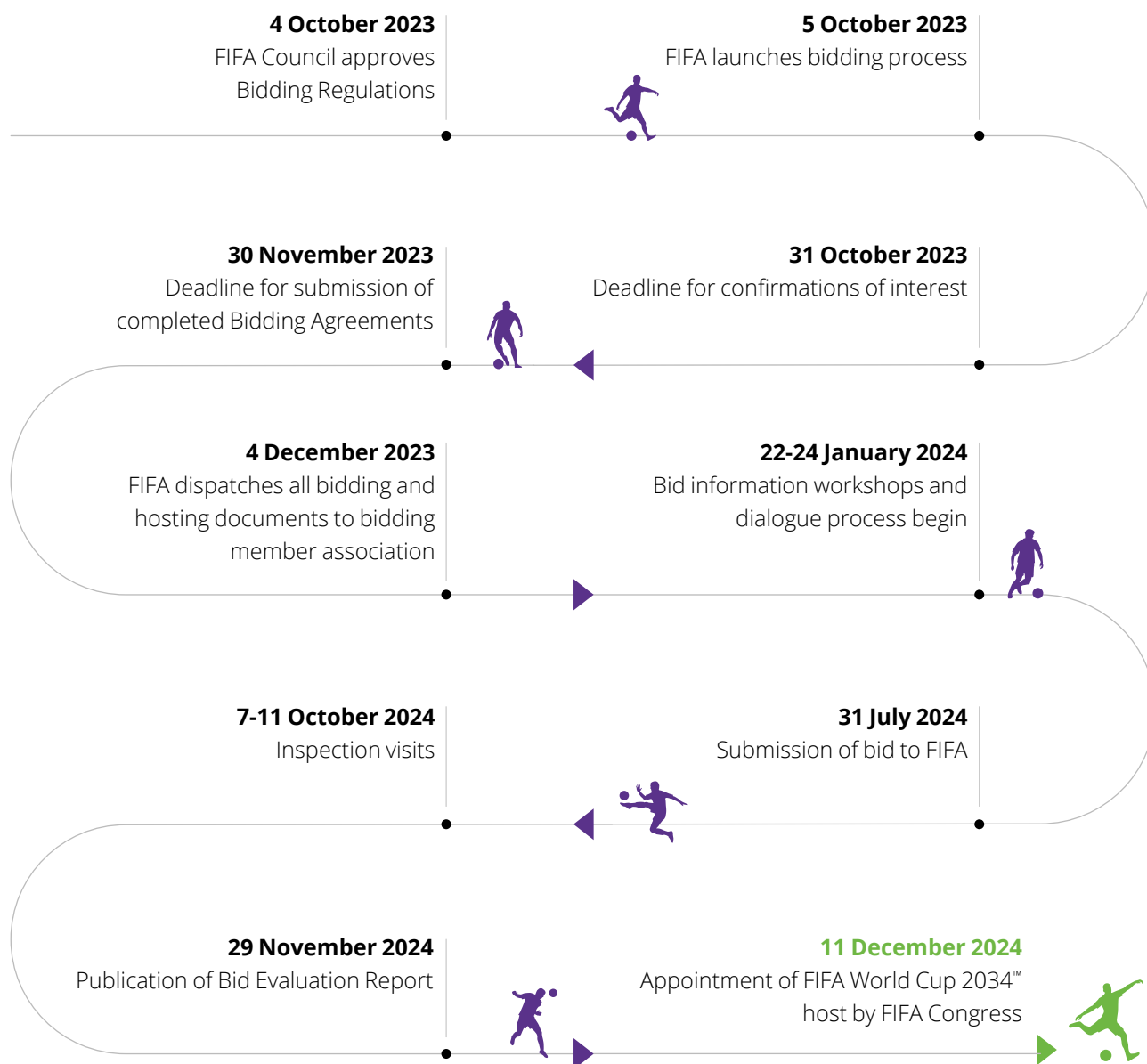
In addition to the Bid Rules of Conduct, all individuals involved in the bidding process must agree to be bound by the FIFA Code of Ethics (see article 7 of the Bidding Regulations). All promotional activities, including any meeting with members of the decision-making bodies, must be comprehensively reported.

## 3.2 COMPETITION FORMAT

The FIFA World Cup 2034 will apply the same format as the 2030 edition: a 48-team tournament with a group stage involving 12 groups of four teams each, followed by a knockout stage commencing with the round of 32, making for a total of 104 matches. The format is represented visually below.



### 3.3 TIMELINE















# BID EVALUATION METHODOLOGY



## 4.1 COMPONENTS

The assessment of the bid to host the FIFA World Cup 2034 has been carried out by members of the FIFA administration with operational, legal and commercial expertise in the relevant areas.

As set out in clause 27.1.1 of the Bidding Agreement and shown below, the Bid Evaluation Report for the FIFA World Cup 2034 bid comprises three key components: risk assessments, technical evaluations (with risk assessments) and descriptions.



### Risk assessments

Detailed assessments of the risks associated with certain criteria along with the application of a risk rating ("low", "medium" or "high"). Additionally, the main infrastructural and commercial components necessary to stage a successful Centenary Celebration and FIFA World Cup are subject to a technical evaluation and given scores (from "0" to "5").

#### Risk assessments have been conducted in the following areas:

Competition-related event sites  
Safety and security  
Health, medical and anti-doping  
IT&T  
Event timing  
Sustainability  
Human rights  
Environmental protection  
Legal  
Compliance

#### Technical evaluations have been conducted in the following areas:

Stadiums  
Team and referee facilities  
Accommodation  
Transport  
International Broadcast Centre (IBC) sites  
FIFA Fan Festival sites  
Commercial



### Descriptions

A series of assessments in text format, providing guidance on the qualities of each bid.

#### Descriptions are provided for the following areas:

General information – host countries and host cities  
Vision and strategy  
Legacy

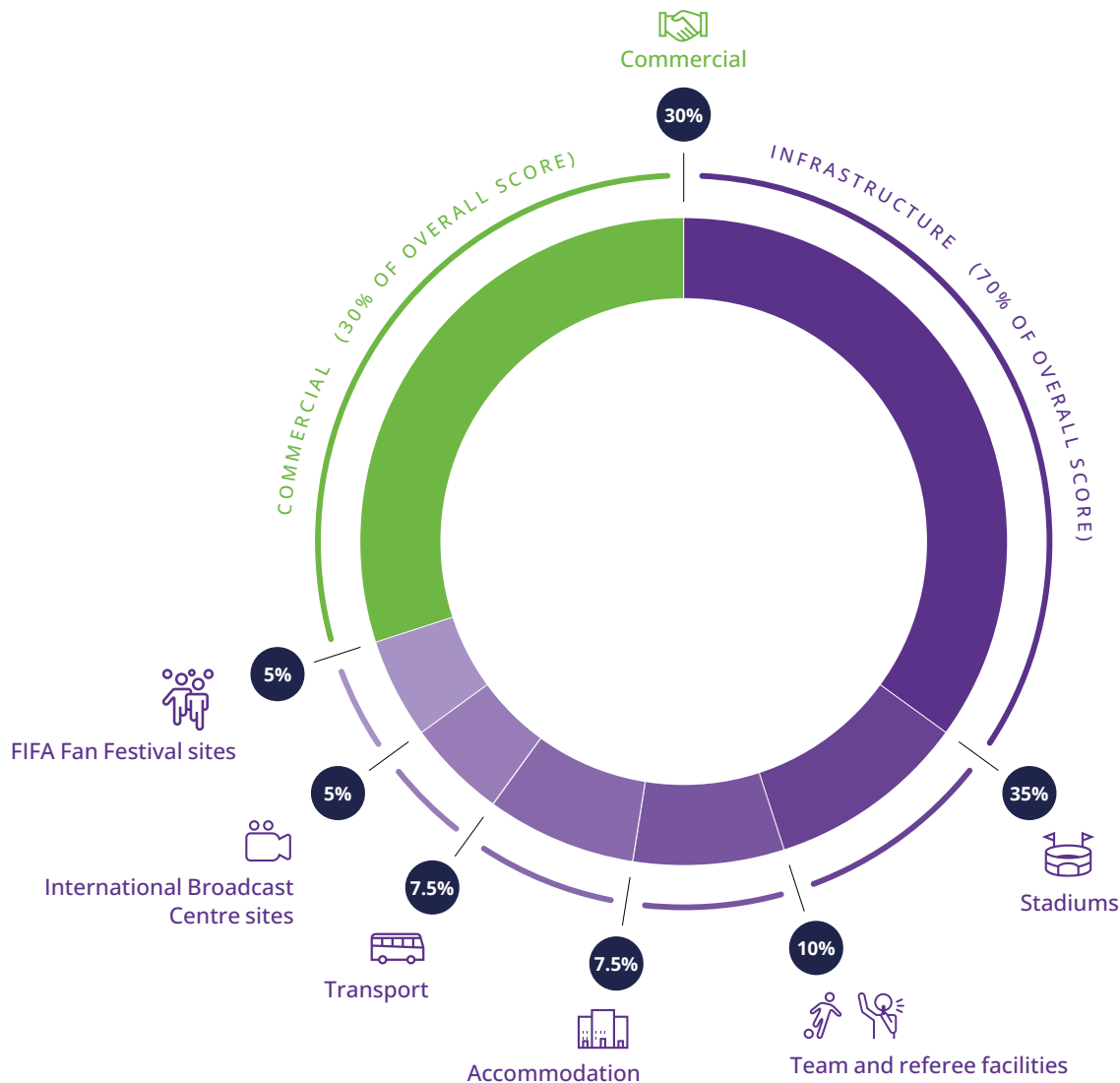


In accordance with the unanimous approval granted by the FIFA Council, if the bid is assessed as having met the minimum hosting requirements according to the results of the technical evaluation, it will be submitted to the FIFA Congress and voted upon en bloc to select the host of the FIFA World Cup 2034.

More details on the scoring system and the weighting of the technical evaluation components are set out in the following section (4.2) of this report.

## 4.2 SCORING SYSTEM FOR THE TECHNICAL EVALUATION

As per section 6.4, paragraph (ii) of the Bidding Regulations and clause 27.5.1.1 of the Bidding Agreement, the scoring system for the technical evaluation of the FIFA World Cup 2034 includes the following seven main criteria covering both infrastructural and commercial aspects and is weighted according to the diagram below.



The weighting for each of the criteria above was apportioned as a general reflection of the importance of each criterion to the technical evaluation of the bid by FIFA in accordance with the overriding objective of securing the best possible hosting conditions to enable FIFA to optimise delivery on its relevant statutory objectives.

Scores are awarded based on a sliding scale of "0" (does not meet minimum requirements) to "5" (very good) with a minimum overall weighted score of "2" (satisfactory) needed for a bid to avoid elimination. In addition, bids will have to reach the minimum score of "2" in each of the following key infrastructural components:

- Stadiums
- Team and referee facilities
- Accommodation
- Transport

If, at the conclusion of the bid evaluation process (when FIFA publishes this Bid Evaluation Report), the bid is assessed as having met the minimum hosting requirements according to the results of the technical evaluation, it will be eligible for submission to the FIFA Congress. The selection of the host of the FIFA World Cup 2034 will take place at the FIFA Congress on 11 December 2024. As the foundation for these bidding processes was the unanimous approval by the FIFA Council, the decision on the host will also be taken en bloc.

A detailed explanation of how the scoring system is applied for each of the criteria can be found in the document FIFA World Cup 2034™: Overview of the Scoring System for the Technical Evaluation of Bids, which is published on [FIFA.com](https://www.fifa.com).

## 4.3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### 4.3.1 BID DOCUMENTATION

The analysis and findings contained in this Bid Evaluation Report are based on a review of the bid received. The bid consists of various documents requested by FIFA, including the following.

#### **Bid book**

The bid book is the core element of the bid. Its main purpose is to provide a comprehensive and conclusive presentation of the bid to FIFA and its decision-making bodies of FIFA, namely the FIFA Council and the delegates of the FIFA Congress.

The bid book has been produced in accordance with strict requirements set out by FIFA regarding structure, content and format. In the interest of transparency, the bid book was published in full on FIFA.com shortly after its submission. The bidder was also requested to provide a bid book executive summary, providing a comprehensive overview of all sections and chapters of the main body of the bid book with the purpose of providing first-hand information from the bidding member association about its bid in the official FIFA languages of English, Spanish and French. The bidder also requested that it be permitted to include an executive summary of the bid book in Arabic, which FIFA approved.

#### **Bid questionnaires**

The bid questionnaires form part of the bid and contain, in a standardised manner, certain operational, technical and other detailed information. The main purpose of the bid questionnaires is to facilitate the evaluation of the bid by FIFA and to enable FIFA to make use of such operational, technical and other detailed information for the operational delivery of the tournament.

#### **Unilaterally executed hosting documents**

The hosting documents also form part of the bid. They are the binding and underlying legal framework between the relevant stakeholders (i.e. member association, government, authorities of host cities, stadiums, training sites, etc.) in connection with hosting the tournament and defining in detail the respective rights and obligations of the parties involved.

### **Other related documents and information requested by FIFA**

In addition to the grouping of documents referenced above, certain topics required detailed reports to be prepared. Therefore, the bidding member association was invited to submit further documentation on these topics in the form of separate supplementary reports. Examples of this included human rights context assessments and human rights strategies explaining how to prevent and mitigate any human rights risks associated with the event. In the interest of transparency, these documents were published on FIFA.com shortly after their submission.

### **Other documents provided by the bidder**

As well as providing specific documents requested by FIFA as part of the bidding requirements, the bidder has provided further documents and information – either voluntarily or in response to direct FIFA requests for clarification.

It is important to note that, in accordance with the Bidding Agreement reached with the bidding member association during the course of the process, the bid is of a binding nature. In other words, all information given, statements made, and plans and measures proposed are legally binding on the bidding member association.

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## **4.3.2 INSPECTIONS AND VERIFICATION OF INFORMATION**

### **Official working and inspection visits**

In addition to the information contained in the bidding documents and exchanged during the dialogue phase, the FIFA administration conducted official working and inspection visits to Saudi Arabia, the main purpose of which was to visit and analyse the proposed sites included in the bid and to engage in discussions with the bid committee to clarify key aspects of its bid.

The official working and inspection visits took place on the following dates:

<b>12-14 December 2023</b>	FIFA working visit to Saudi Arabia
<b>22-26 April 2024</b>	FIFA working visit to Saudi Arabia
<b>7-11 October 2024</b>	FIFA inspection visit to Saudi Arabia









# INDIVIDUAL BID EVALUATION

SAUDI ARABIA



## 5.1 DESCRIPTIONS

### 5.1.1 GENERAL INFORMATION – HOST COUNTRY AND HOST CITIES

#### General country information

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the largest country in the Arabian Peninsula, spanning an area of over 2.1 million km<sup>2</sup> and bordering the Persian Gulf to the east, the Red Sea to the west, and Yemen to the south. Its terrain consists largely of desert, including the vast Rub' al Khali, the largest continuous sand desert in the world, lowland as well as mountain ranges. It is home to many ancient historical sites, as well as to the two holiest cities in Islam, Mecca and Medina. The Kingdom is covered by a single time zone (UTC+3).

Saudi Arabia has a population of just over 32 million. Historically, its inhabitants were mostly nomadic or semi-nomadic, but in modern times the country's largely urban population has settled mainly in the wide area across the middle of the peninsula, from Ad Dammam in the east, through Riyadh in the interior, to Mecca-Medina in the west. It is a Kingdom of diverse peoples, with a large expatriate population, mainly from neighbouring Arab and Afro-Asian countries. Its official language is Arabic, although English is widely spoken.

Saudi Arabia is a monarchy based on Islam. The government is headed by King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The King is assisted in his duties by the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The King governs with the help of the Council of Ministers, who are responsible for executive and administrative matters such as foreign and domestic policy. The King is advised by a 150-member legislative body called the Shura Council with respect to economic and social plans, laws, regulations, international treaties and conventions. Legislation is issued pursuant to a Royal Decree in the light of the recommendations of the Council of Ministers and the Shura Council.

The Kingdom is divided into 13 administrative provinces, each with its own governor and council, which deal with the development of the province. Because Saudi Arabia is an Islamic state, its judicial system is based on Islamic law (Shari'ah) and is independent of the previously mentioned authorities. The King is at the top of the legal system. He acts as the final court of appeal and can issue pardons. The largest courts in the Kingdom are the Shari'ah Courts, which hear most cases in the Saudi legal system.

For much of the last century, the Saudi Arabian economy relied on its petroleum sector following the discovery of commercial volumes of oil in the 1930s, which allowed the economy to progress rapidly. Today, Saudi Arabia ranks as the world's leading oil exporter. To reduce its dependence on oil, the economy is undergoing a transformation, as the Kingdom implements reforms as part of Vision 2030 to diversify its economy and elevate sports, tourism and technology, among others, to top-priority sectors. Saudi Arabia welcomed more than 27 million international tourists in 2023 and enjoys an increasing status as a tourism destination, with visitors drawn in among other things by its seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites. More than 300,000 jobs have been created in its tourism sector since 2019. Upwards of 150 million international and domestic tourists a year are expected by 2030, with the tourism and travel sector's direct contribution to GDP projected to reach 10%, compared to 3.8% in 2019.

## Proposed host cities

Saudi Arabia has proposed five host cities for the FIFA World Cup 2034: Riyadh, Jeddah, Al Khobar, Abha and NEOM. The bidder states that each of these cities has undergone significant developments as part of the broader Vision 2030 in the Kingdom, seeing each invest heavily in tourism infrastructure in recent years to support an expanding tourism sector and to successfully host major events across sport, arts, culture and business. Such initiatives are politically and financially backed by Vision 2030.

All five proposed host cities will have modern airports connecting over 250 international destinations. Current and planned bus, road and rail routes will provide connections between the five host cities and the eight countries that share Saudi Arabia's land border. Extensive public transport options will be available within each city – including buses, metros, trains and tournament-specific shuttle buses. Fans will also be encouraged to consider more active and sustainable mobility choices, such as walking and cycling, for shorter trips within the same city. For example, the 135-kilometre Sports Boulevard consists of seven routes in Riyadh dedicated to walking and cycling.

The time zone of UTC+3 in the proposed host cities allows broadcasters to effectively cover multiple regions worldwide at times convenient for a diverse international audience. When it comes to determining the timing for the FIFA World Cup 2034, the bidder has committed to working closely with FIFA to create a schedule that considers other sporting, cultural and religious events taking place in the cities and avoids overlap. Temperatures in the proposed host cities in June, July and August generally average around mid-30 degrees Celsius, except in the colder Abha. From December to February, temperatures average between 15°C and 26°C, depending on the city.

## Host city information

Host city	Host city population	Altitude (metres above sea level)	Time zone (in June-July)	Average temperature (°C) and humidity (%) in June							
				12:00		14:00		16:00		18:00	
				(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)
Abha	1,380,000	2,230	UTC+3	31	22	32	23	31	27	28	34
Al Khobar	3,890,000	10	UTC+3	37	38	37	43	36	48	34	51
Jeddah	5,000,000	17	UTC+3	34	50	34	51	34	52	32	55
NEOM	300,000	230	UTC+3	33	19	35	16	35	15	35	16
Riyadh	15,000,000	625	UTC+3	40	9	42	8	42	7	40	8

\*Source: Saudi Arabia 2034 bid book



### National team

Widely regarded as one of Asia's most successful men's national teams, Saudi Arabia has qualified for the FIFA World Cup on six occasions, most recently in 2022, when they defeated eventual winners Argentina 2-1 in their first group match. The Green Falcons, as they are known, also qualified for the final of the 1992 King Fahd Cup, the first edition of the tournament that would later become known as the FIFA Confederations Cup. At a continental level, they have won the AFC Asian Cup on three occasions and finished runners-up a further three times. Other national team honours include the FIFA Arab Cup, which they won in 1998 and 2002.

### Previous sporting events

In recent years, Saudi Arabia has built a reputation for the effective delivery of major sporting events. The bidder states that the Kingdom has prioritised the staging of football events but has hosted more than 100 international events across almost 40 different sports.

Its experience in staging major football events includes hosting the FIFA Club World Cup 2023™ and the inaugural edition of the FIFA Series 2024™, and it will host the 2027 AFC Asian Cup. It has also hosted prestigious matches such as the Spanish and Italian Super Cups and the 2023 AFC Champions League Final. Looking further back, the Kingdom was the host of the first three editions of the FIFA Confederations Cup (in 1992, 1995 and 1997).

When it comes to other major sports, Saudi Arabia has hosted numerous events such as the Formula 1 Saudi Arabian Grand Prix (2021-2024) and the Dakar Rally, as well as prestigious international golf tournaments such as LIV Golf Jeddah and the Aramco Team Series.

				Average temperature (°C) and humidity (%) in July											
20:00		22:00		12:00		14:00		16:00		18:00		20:00		22:00	
(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)	(°C)	(%)
26	42	25	47	30	27	31	27	30	31	28	38	26	48	25	54
33	52	33	53	38	42	38	48	37	53	35	57	34	59	34	60
31	59	31	58	35	50	35	50	35	51	34	53	33	56	32	55
32	19	31	23	34	21	36	19	36	18	36	18	33	22	32	26
36	9	35	11	41	9	43	8	43	8	41	8	38	10	36	12

## 5.1.2 HOSTING VISION AND STRATEGY

### Evaluation

Saudi Arabia presents a hosting vision which it believes can unite, inspire and reach every corner of the world in a way that honours, enhances and grows the global game. Its vision revolves around the bid slogan '*Growing Together*' and is subdivided into the three sections '*Growing People. Together*', '*Growing Football. Together*' and '*Growing Connections. Together*'. As the bidder explains, this vision is part of the Kingdom's national strategic project, Vision 2030, a historic country-wide effort to unlock a future of economic growth and social development for all, building on the three key pillars of a vibrant society, a thriving economy and an ambitious nation.

Football is the most popular sport in Saudi Arabia and Vision 2030 has further amplified the importance of the game, with plans in place to launch an ambitious National Football Strategy. In addition to benefiting the game within Saudi Arabia, the bidder also notably emphasises that its ambition is outward-focused and that, through its bid, it wants to help support the growth of football and ensure the game is accessible to more people around the world.

As part of its plans for '*Growing People. Together*', the bidder cites the marked impact that hosting the tournament will have on Saudi Arabia's young population for generations to come, by giving rise to sporting, infrastructure and economic benefits. It presents Saudi Arabia's initiatives to grow women's participation in sport, including the launch of a FIFA Football for Schools programme and four regional training centres. On a societal level too, Saudi Arabia has introduced reforms such as the Labor Reform Initiative (2021) to enhance protections for workers, and new legislation to protect persons with disability and promote accessibility across the sports sector. The bidder states that these reforms are a small example of the many reforms to come and believes the FIFA World Cup 2034 will strengthen this transformation.

When it comes to '*Growing Football. Together*', the bidder intends to grow on the national team's success by further expanding its already growing professional league. An influx of world-class players has helped to professionalise the Kingdom's teams and level of play, while the number of coaches, the funding for youth football and the spread of regional training centres have all increased significantly. The bidder plans to use the opportunity presented by hosting the FIFA World Cup 2034 to further improve the standard of football within Saudi Arabia and also increase the role it plays in the international football community.

To achieve the third pillar of its bid, '*Growing Connections. Together*', the bidder explains that, for the occasion of the FIFA World Cup 2034, more teams and more fans than ever before will come together in one country to create lifelong connections through football. It refers to its experience of staging international sporting events and delivers an assurance that, if Saudi Arabia is selected as the host country, FIFA and the global football family can trust it to deliver all the necessary resources and experience for an impeccable competition.

The bidder is explicit in detailing how its vision aligns with the FIFA's vision to make football truly global, diverse and inclusive for the benefit of the entire world. Rather than focusing solely on benefits to Saudi Arabia, the bidder sets out how it would harness the power of football to motivate and drive growth and new connections across our society and global communities.

Moreover, the bidder details how its bid to host the FIFA World Cup 2034 would have a significant impact in terms of supporting all 11 of FIFA's goals to make football truly global. In particular, it would work with FIFA to deliver fan engagement through eFootball and investments in next-generation technologies such as artificial intelligence; organise more youth tournaments at various levels for boys and girls; and reduce the disparity between different global regions by applying the learnings from its rapidly growing development programmes.

## Conclusion

The bidder has set out a very clear and well-structured hosting concept that carefully takes into account both the development of football within its own borders and the impact its development activities could have on the wider footballing community. In particular, the bidder has aligned its vision closely with the strategic objectives for the global game set out by FIFA. The clarity of the concept and the level of detail presented provides reassurance that hosting the tournament in Saudi Arabia would create further opportunities for the country's population to participate in football as well as propel the country's transformation to the benefit of other stakeholder groups in its society.

### 5.1.3 LEGACY

#### Evaluation

In discussing the legacy that Saudi Arabia aspires to create from hosting the FIFA World Cup 2034, it is important to note that the Kingdom's bid to host the tournament is integrated in its wide-reaching Vision 2030 project to transform the nation and its society as a whole. Accordingly, the Federation, the government and all stakeholders have committed to ensure that the tournament would deliver lasting benefits in terms of football, infrastructure and society.

In the words of the bidder, Vision 2030 has developed, enabled and supported a transformation which is reshaping Saudi sport and society. This includes the development of world-class stadia, state-of-the-art training sites and supporting infrastructure. Vision 2030 is also the cornerstone that has allowed the creation of new cities and communities across the nation, all with outstanding accommodation, transport and other facilities.

In terms of a domestic footballing legacy, the bidder's goal is to grow the game for men, women, boys and girls and to increase the number of players, coaches and spectators. The Federation's efforts to develop the game in Saudi Arabia span four main areas: the elite men's game, the elite and wider women's game, youth football and grassroots football.

When it comes to the development of the elite men's game, the priorities are to deliver success for the national team, support the transformation of the Saudi Pro League, and grow football by building international connections. In the women's game, Saudi Arabia has made significant strides in developing interest and grassroots participation for women and girls, and at the elite level, it has established two leagues, registered more than 1,000 players and seen its women's team secure its first successes, including gaining a FIFA ranking and securing its first trophy by winning the inaugural edition of the Federation's Women's International Friendly Tournament in 2023. In youth football, the country has launched a national scouting scheme and committed to create 25 regional training centres. Moreover, the Federation has continued to expand awareness, competitions and education programmes to spark greater interest in football at a grassroots level.

Looking outside its own national borders, the bidder wants to collaborate with member associations worldwide to grow the game and plans to launch a research institute to foster football exchanges and development.

Saudi Arabia also intends to use its bid as part of Vision 2030 to significantly improve its sporting infrastructure, by refurbishing and constructing new stadiums as part of city development programmes that support the growth of football and the wider entertainment industry. The bidder states that these investments would yield economic and social value for years to come, using innovative and sustainable technologies to ensure their continued suitability for football and other events. An anchor tenant and a main legacy use have been identified for all the stadiums. Meanwhile, the training centres to be used during the FIFA World Cup 2034 will be available for the benefit of all football in Saudi Arabia after the tournament. A national training centre, regional training centres and elite training centres are also being developed as part of the country's legacy plans.

In addition, the bidder vows that the other infrastructure that would be put in place for the tournament, including accommodation, transport and other amenities to make visitors' stays comfortable and memorable, would form the foundations for developing a dynamic and sustainable tourism industry. The bidder has the stated aim of generating 1.6 million jobs in the tourism sector by 2030 should Saudi Arabia be awarded the hosting rights for the tournament.

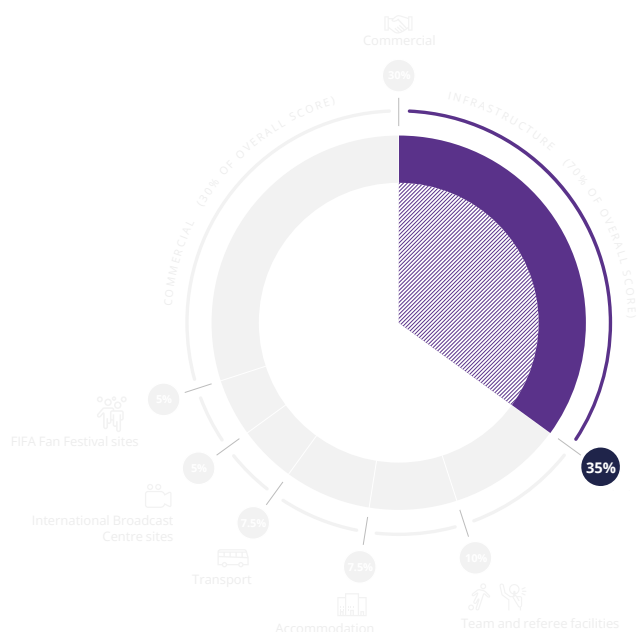
### Conclusion

The bidder has presented a detailed and comprehensive picture of how it intends to use its prospective hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2034 to benefit its youthful population for generations to come. As the close alignment between the bidder's legacy objectives and its national Vision 2030 suggest, its aspiration extends beyond football to the ongoing transformation of the nation itself. The proposals set out in the bid book align well with FIFA's strategic objectives to develop youth football, drive further development in women's football, and focus on player and coach development.



## 5.2 TECHNICAL EVALUATION WITH RISK ASSESSMENTS

### 5.2.1 STADIUMS



#### Stadiums

Sub-criterion	Weighting
Suitability	20%
Stadium capacity	20%
Stadium orientation and space requirements	15%
Pitch	15%
Technical installations	15%
Overlay	7.5%
Sustainability	7.5%

#### Evaluation

##### Overview

The Saudi Arabia bid proposes 15 stadiums across five proposed host cities, slightly above the minimum number of 14 stadiums required to host the competition.

Of these 15 stadiums, eight are planned new-builds, including the King Salman International Stadium, which is proposed as the venue for the opening match and final. Another three stadiums are currently under construction and will host the AFC Asian Cup in 2027. Of the four existing stadiums presented, the country's two largest current stadiums (King Fahad Sports City Stadium and King Abdullah Sports City Stadium) will undergo a number of upgrades while two stadiums situated on university campuses (King Khalid University Stadium and King Saud University Stadium) will be refurbished and undergo temporary capacity expansions.

Based on the extensive plans presented, the bid projects a range of impressive stadiums that, when built or refurbished, will offer state-of-the-art infrastructure. Individually, the stadiums offer very good options for hosting the FIFA World Cup.

The bid includes some ambitious stadium projects integrated into unique locations, including the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium, located within the Qiddiya development, and NEOM Stadium, located within THE LINE development. Moreover, there are stadiums such as New Murabba Stadium and ROSHN Stadium whose extended roof structures and footprints blend into the surrounding neighbourhoods. Whilst these "one-of-a-kind" stadium projects have tremendous potential and will undoubtedly change the way future stadium designs and structures are approached, the proposed configuration and location of the FIFA World Cup spaces in these stadiums is certainly

unprecedented and would likely require a reimagining of operations, with some associated unknowns or challenges at this moment in time. Consequently, should the bid be successful, it would be imperative to closely monitor and support these projects from initiation to completion.

In terms of geography, eight of the stadiums will be located in the Riyadh area, with a further four in Jeddah. The remaining three stadiums are located in Al Khobar on the east coast, Abha in the south-west, and the futuristic NEOM development on the west coast, respectively. This footprint will facilitate the clustering of tournament services and operations such as was successfully deployed for the FIFA World Cup 2022™ in Qatar.

The stadiums meet the overall capacity requirements for the stage/category of the competition for which they are respectively proposed. The availability of hospitality and VIP seating is generally in line with requirements. In the case of two stadiums (King Fahad Sports City and Prince Mohammed bin Salman), the plans for which do not currently include the required provision of hospitality and VIP seating in the stand opposite the main stand, FIFA would look to work with the bidder to achieve the optimum configuration. The provision of accessible seating and associated facilities generally meets most or all the related requirements.

Most stadiums are located in generously spaced precincts with good access links, which would facilitate the availability of the required FIFA World Cup spaces and overlay structures. In individual cases, spaces indicated for the hospitality villages may need to be extended but ample space appears to be available to do so. In the case of some stadiums (such as New Murabba and Qiddiya Coast), not only will the stadium be newly built but also the surrounding infrastructure, which means that the evaluation of ingress and egress is only possible at a conceptual level at this stage.

The stadiums are all orientated in the required north-south range, with the exception of the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium and ROSHN Stadium, where further work and adaptations would be required to avoid potential sun path issues with the media and VIP tribunes. For each stadium, the space planning has been thoroughly considered and would offer good options for FIFA World Cup operations.

When it comes to the field of play, the planned pitch installations, featuring hybrid-reinforced grass surfaces and vacuum and ventilation systems, are fully compliant, and all the pitches and their surrounding areas are of the necessary dimensions.







The technical installations would also be fully compliant in terms of power supply and redundancy. In all stadiums, the floodlighting system will be installed or upgraded to FIFA Standard A. At least two giant screens will be present in each stadium. In terms of IT&T infrastructure, the planned installations appear to be of a high standard. As the tournament will take place in approximately ten years and these elements evolve rapidly, should the bid be successful, this will be an important area of further clarification and alignment as further designs are developed.

All stadium authorities are committed to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level, and there are a number of impressive sustainability initiatives within the individual stadium bid submissions, ranging from renewable energy to the reuse of construction materials.

The post-FIFA World Cup 2034 legacy use of a number of stadiums appears to be relatively well considered from a conceptual standpoint, with some stadiums allocated to the national team and Saudi Pro League football clubs as anchor tenants, whilst others are proposed for mixed use including other sports and entertainment events and/or community use. Three stadiums (two on university campuses) would reduce their capacity after the tournament to match their anticipated legacy needs.

As a final point, it is important to note that the stadium authorities of all proposed stadiums have executed the stadium agreements that contractually commit and bind the parties to delivering the venues in accordance with the hosting requirements.

## SAUDI ARABIA STADIUM PROPOSALS\*

1		<b>Host city:</b> Riyadh <b>Stadium:</b> King Salman International Stadium <b>Highest proposed match category:</b> Opening match/final <b>Gross capacity:</b> 92,760 <b>Current pitch type:</b> Hybrid <b>Status:</b> Planned
2		<b>Host city:</b> Riyadh <b>Stadium:</b> Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium <b>Highest proposed match category:</b> Match for third place <b>Gross capacity:</b> 46,979 <b>Current pitch type:</b> Hybrid <b>Status:</b> Planned
3		<b>Host city:</b> Riyadh <b>Stadium:</b> King Fahad Sports City Stadium <b>Highest proposed match category:</b> Semi-final <b>Gross capacity:</b> 70,200 <b>Current pitch type:</b> Hybrid <b>Status:</b> Existing, refurbishment
4		<b>Host city:</b> Jeddah <b>Stadium:</b> King Abdullah Sports City Stadium <b>Highest proposed match category:</b> Quarter-final <b>Gross capacity:</b> 58,432 <b>Current pitch type:</b> Hybrid <b>Status:</b> Existing, refurbishment
5		<b>Host city:</b> NEOM <b>Stadium:</b> NEOM Stadium <b>Highest proposed match category:</b> Quarter-final <b>Gross capacity:</b> 46,010 <b>Current pitch type:</b> Hybrid <b>Status:</b> Planned
6		<b>Host city:</b> Abha <b>Stadium:</b> King Khalid University Stadium <b>Highest proposed match category:</b> Round of 16 <b>Gross capacity:</b> 45,428 <b>Current pitch type:</b> Hybrid <b>Status:</b> Existing, refurbishment





7	<b>Host city:</b>	Al Khobar
	<b>Stadium:</b>	Aramco Stadium
	<b>Highest proposed match category:</b>	Round of 16
	<b>Gross capacity:</b>	46,096
	<b>Current pitch type:</b>	Hybrid
	<b>Status:</b>	Under construction



8	<b>Host city:</b>	Jeddah
	<b>Stadium:</b>	Qiddiya Coast Stadium
	<b>Highest proposed match category:</b>	Round of 16
	<b>Gross capacity:</b>	46,096
	<b>Current pitch type:</b>	Hybrid
	<b>Status:</b>	Planned



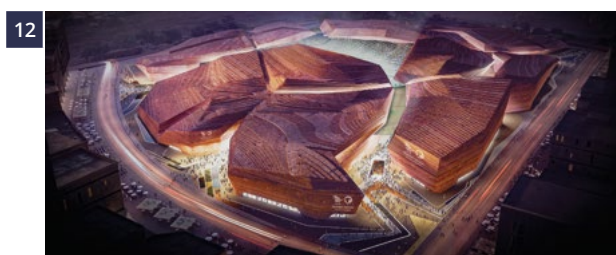
9	<b>Host city:</b>	Jeddah
	<b>Stadium:</b>	Jeddah Central Development Stadium
	<b>Highest proposed match category:</b>	Round of 32
	<b>Gross capacity:</b>	45,794
	<b>Current pitch type:</b>	Hybrid
	<b>Status:</b>	Under construction



10	<b>Host city:</b>	Jeddah
	<b>Stadium:</b>	King Abdullah Economic City Stadium
	<b>Highest proposed match category:</b>	Round of 32
	<b>Gross capacity:</b>	45,700
	<b>Current pitch type:</b>	Hybrid
	<b>Status:</b>	Planned



11	<b>Host city:</b>	Riyadh
	<b>Stadium:</b>	King Saud University Stadium
	<b>Highest proposed match category:</b>	Round of 32
	<b>Gross capacity:</b>	46,319
	<b>Current pitch type:</b>	Hybrid
	<b>Status:</b>	Existing, refurbishment



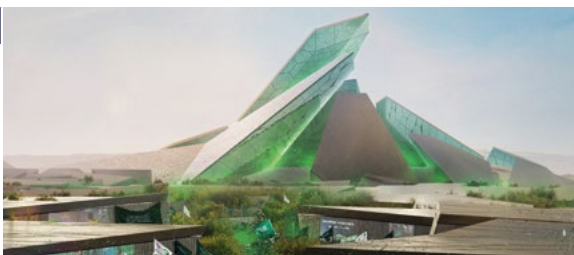
12	<b>Host city:</b>	Riyadh
	<b>Stadium:</b>	New Murabba Stadium
	<b>Highest proposed match category:</b>	Round of 32
	<b>Gross capacity:</b>	46,010
	<b>Current pitch type:</b>	Hybrid
	<b>Status:</b>	Planned

13



Host city:	Riyadh
Stadium:	Prince Faisal bin Fahad Sports City Stadium
Highest proposed match category:	Round of 32
Gross capacity:	46,865
Current pitch type:	Hybrid
Status:	Under construction

14



Host city:	Riyadh
Stadium:	ROSHN Stadium
Highest proposed match category:	Round of 32
Gross capacity:	46,000
Current pitch type:	Hybrid
Status:	Planned

15



Host city:	Riyadh
Stadium:	South Riyadh Stadium
Highest proposed match category:	Round of 32
Gross capacity:	47,060
Current pitch type:	Hybrid
Status:	Planned

\*All capacity figures are based on information provided in the bid book.

## 1 Riyadh: King Salman International Stadium (opening match/final)

King Salman International Stadium, proposed by the bidder as the venue for the opening match and final, is a new stadium to be built in the north-east of Riyadh, close to the airport. Construction is due to commence in 2025 and will be completed by 2030. The new stadium will serve as the national stadium of Saudi Arabia and will be used by the Saudi Arabia national team.

The design meets the requirements and, when completed, it promises to be a flagship stadium with state-of-the-art facilities. The planned gross capacity of 92,760 meets the minimum requirement of 80,000 seats for an opening match/final venue.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures. Whilst the space currently allocated to the broadcast appears to be below the requirements for a final venue, ample space should be available to extend and reconfigure this as required. A considered and credible plan has been provided to accommodate the required spaces within and immediately outside the stadium.

The capacity of hospitality seating and boxes meets the minimum requirement for an opening match/final venue, as does the VVIP and VIP seating. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating. The stadium orientation also complies with the requirements, with the main stand located in the west. The proposed roof will cover the media and VIP tribunes.



In relation to the field of play, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The planned technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and four giant video screens of 100m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

From a sustainability perspective, the bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. From a legacy perspective, as mentioned about, the stadium has a clear purpose to serve as the country's national stadium.

In addition to the bid submission, a site visit to the stadium precinct and separate presentations on the stadium's design were organised as part of the inspection visit, where detailed plans and maps were presented and discussed, ultimately confirming the stadium's overall suitability.

## 2 Riyadh: Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium

Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the match for third place, is a new state-of-the-art stadium to be built to the south-west of Riyadh. The unique three-sided design will be integrated into a cliff-side location and serve as an entertainment showpiece hub for the Qiddiya development. Construction is due to commence in 2026 and will be completed by 2029. The planned gross capacity of 46,979 meets the minimum requirement of 40,000 for the proposed match categories.

The bid submission appears to indicate the allocation of the required spaces, although the stadium's unique design may require adaptations to the more traditional operational approach. The cliff-side aspect also partially limits the flexibility to deploy overlay solutions in the surrounding area. The bidder has provided flow studies to determine how the stadium would integrate into its surrounding area in terms of access flows and transport hubs, albeit these are conceptual at this stage. Some required spaces around the stadium, such as hospitality villages, do not appear to meet the requirements as presented in the plans, although there appears to be sufficient space to expand these, notwithstanding the above-mentioned comment regarding the unique location. The broadcast compound is split between outside and underground areas, which appears, conceptually, to facilitate FIFA World Cup operations.

It is worth noting that the proposed stadium orientation does not comply with current requirements, with the main stand located in the east. However, the proposed retractable roof could mitigate any sun path issues. The lack of a spectator stand opposite the main stand is novel and means that some facilities, such as hospitality seating and hospitality boxes, are located atypically. If the bid is successful, FIFA would work together with the bidder to establish an appropriate competition presentation concept for this camera-facing location. It is also worth noting that during the specific on-site workshop in Qiddiya and the broader inspection visit, it was confirmed that the roof could be closed and the wall on the open side could be deployed to potentially mitigate some of the issues highlighted above.

The overall availability of hospitality seating meets the requirements. The lack of touchline boxes for the hosting of commercial affiliates would need to be given further consideration. The VVIP and VIP seating capacity meets the requirements, although the impact of the setting sun on these seats, and the views from the associated lounges, requires further analysis. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system, although the operation of the retractable pitch would require further review. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions. During the inspection visit, it was noted that the retractable pitch would be suspended above the stadium base. The impact of this on the performance characteristics of the pitch would also require further analysis.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and four giant video screens of 100m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The stadium will serve as a multi-purpose entertainment venue after the FIFA World Cup 2034 and also host two Saudi Pro League sides. This indicates that the development will have long-lasting benefits to both the football and the wider community.

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### **3 Riyadh: King Fahad Sports City Stadium**

King Fahad Sports City Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the semi-final, is the current home of the Saudi Arabia national team. It is being refurbished ahead of hosting the AFC Asian Cup 2027. The refurbishment will increase the capacity to 70,200, which exceeds the minimum requirement of 60,000 seats for a semi-final venue, as well as remove the athletics track and provide enhanced hospitality facilities.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures. Some key spaces within the stadium, such as hospitality boxes and VVIP/VIP lounges, may require adaptation. For example, the provision of hospitality boxes is concentrated behind the goals, with none provided in the opposite stand as required. However, if the bid is successful, FIFA would collaborate with the stadium authority on the optimum configuration in this respect.

Although the overall availability of hospitality seating meets the requirements, the lack of touchline boxes may be a potential issue for the hosting of commercial affiliates. The VVIP and VIP seating capacity meets the requirements, although the flows and associated lounge facilities require further consideration. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating. The orientation of the stadium lies just outside the required range, however with the main stand in the west and the provision of roof cover, no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed post-refurbishment with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. As with other proposed stadiums, the stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, whilst a 360-degree halo screen is planned. Similarly, the development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The refurbished stadium will serve as a multi-purpose entertainment venue after the FIFA World Cup 2034 and also host football matches. The hosting of the AFC Asian Cup 2027 is driving the current refurbishment and will create a clear legacy benefit up until the opening of the King Salman International Stadium.

#### 4 Jeddah: King Abdullah Sports City Stadium

King Abdullah Sports City Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the quarter-final, was built in 2014 and is currently home to two well-supported Saudi Pro League teams – Al Ahli and Al Ittihad. The stadium also successfully hosted the FIFA Club World Cup 2023, and will be used to host the AFC Asian Cup 2027 and undergo refurbishment from 2030 with a view to reflecting the requirements for hosting the FIFA World Cup 2034. Its capacity of 58,432 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a quarter-final venue.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures. The overall availability of hospitality seating meets the requirements, while the VVIP and VIP seating capacity exceeds the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range, and no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path.

The current pitch already has a hybrid-reinforced grass surface, and the required vacuum and ventilation system will be incorporated into the planned refurbishment. The field of play is of the necessary dimensions and, although the surrounding pitch area is close to the required dimensions and a little tighter in the corners, it is anticipated that operational solutions could be deployed to mitigate this.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines and a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A was recently installed. Further development of the designs for the giant video screens is required to verify that they are compliant. The provision of IT&T services is considered strong. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The refurbished stadium will serve as a multi-purpose venue after the FIFA World Cup 2034, although the two current club tenants may be relocated to a new stadium. The stadium will also host the AFC Asian Cup 2027 and future matches of the Saudi Arabia national team.

#### 5 NEOM: NEOM Stadium

NEOM Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the quarter-final, is a new state-of-the-art stadium to be built in a sports-focused district within the first phase of THE LINE, a futuristic development stretching from the Red Sea and based on renewable energy and sustainable transport. The new stadium, which will be a focal point of the overall development, will be located on the upper level. Construction is due to commence in 2027 and will be completed by 2032. The planned gross capacity of 46,010 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a quarter-final venue.

The bid submission appears to indicate the allocation of the required spaces based on the plans shared, although similar to Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium in Riyadh, the stadium's unique design and location will require adaptations to the traditional operational approach. For example, the stadium's foundations, walls and roof are fully integrated into its surrounding neighbourhood, with the various constituent groups gaining access from levels below the stadium. The proposed design of the stadium and its integration into its surroundings are currently conceptual and careful further analysis would be required to collectively assess their suitability for FIFA World Cup operations. This also applies to how the stadium would integrate into its surrounding area in terms of access flows and transport hubs, for which a concept flow study has been provided.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation complies with the requirements, with the main stand located in the west.

As with all other proposed stadiums, the stadium will incorporate a hybrid-reinforced grass pitch. During the inspection visit, the required vacuum and ventilation system was discussed but is subject to confirmation. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant video screens of 200m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. From a legacy standpoint, the stadium will serve as a multi-purpose venue after the FIFA World Cup 2034 and host men's and women's professional teams. This indicates that the development will have long-lasting benefits to the surrounding community.

During the FIFA inspection visit in October 2024, in-depth stadium plans were presented and discussed in detail. Further analysis will be essential, particularly in terms of access, ingress, egress, evacuation and the deployment of overlay structures. The integration of the stadium into THE LINE requires further analysis to ensure smooth logistics and access flows for FIFA operations.

## **6 Abha: King Khalid University Stadium**

King Khalid University Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round of 16, is an existing multi-purpose stadium on the university campus that will undergo refurbishment commencing in 2030 to temporarily expand its capacity and provide enhanced hospitality facilities. Its capacity of 45,428 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-16 venue. The temporary capacity expansion will be achieved via a temporary seating structure on top of the existing bowl structure and athletics track, providing a capacity of approximately 38,000. This will allow the stadium to keep its main bowl structure and athletic track for legacy use.

The bid submission indicates that some space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures, although this is partially constrained by surrounding roads and buildings. Adjacent buildings on the campus are proposed for FIFA World Cup use. Some key spaces, such as hospitality villages, do not meet the requirements as shown but there appears to be space to expand these as required.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements, as does the provision of wheelchair spaces and associated sanitary facilities. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range, and no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed post-refurbishment with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, the floodlighting system will be upgraded to comply with FIFA Standard A, and the refurbishment will also

include the installation of two giant video screens of 200m<sup>2</sup>. The provision of IT&T systems appears to meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The refurbished stadium, which will have a reduced capacity after the FIFA World Cup 2034, will host a professional club side, university teams and summer training activities.

## 8 Al Khobar: Aramco Stadium

Aramco Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round of 16, is currently being built as part of a sports and leisure development and will host matches in the AFC Asian Cup 2027. The planned gross capacity of 46,096 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-16 venue.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures. It is worth noting that the stadium is located in the tip of a triangle formed by surrounding roads, meaning that most spaces beyond the stadium are clustered to the south. In this respect, a credible space allocation and overlay plan has been provided.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range and the stadium has full roof coverage.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and four giant video screens of 300m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The new stadium will be a multi-purpose venue including hosting a Saudi Pro League team. The current construction is being driven by the stadium's hosting of the AFC Asian Cup 2027, the progress of which was broadly observed and discussed during the site visits, and it is anticipated that other tournaments will be hosted here after the FIFA World Cup 2034. There are also plans to open the wider surrounding area to community use, which should create lasting legacy benefits.

## 8 Jeddah: Qiddiya Coast Stadium

Qiddiya Coast Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round of 16, will be a new state-of-the-art stadium located to the north of Jeddah on the Red Sea coast. Construction is due to commence in 2029 and will be completed by 2032. The planned gross capacity of 46,096 meets the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-16 venue. After the FIFA World Cup 2034, the capacity of the stadium would be reduced and the retractable pitch used to facilitate a multi-purpose entertainment venue at the heart of the Qiddiya Coast development.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate FIFA World Cup spaces and overlay structures, although this is partially impacted by surrounding roads and water channels. The hospitality villages, as currently presented, would not meet the requirements, but space appears to be available to extend these as required. Further development of the plans is required to indicate how the stadium would integrate into its surrounding area in terms of access flows and transport hubs. A load-in flow study has been provided, which appears to be well planned but remains conceptual at this stage.

The stadium orientation complies with the requirements, with the main stand located in the west.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant video screens of 200m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The stadium will be located within close proximity to waterway inlets and the sea, and consideration must be given to minimising any potential impacts on the coastal and marine ecosystems during such development. The stadium would serve as a multi-purpose entertainment venue after the FIFA World Cup 2034, with its retractable pitch facilitating the hosting of e-sports and concerts. After the tournament, the upper-tier seating would be removed to create a 25,000 capacity venue that would provide long-term value to the surrounding Qiddiya Coast development.

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## 9 Jeddah: Jeddah Central Development Stadium

Jeddah Central Development Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, is currently being built as part of a sports park district within the wider Jeddah Central Development in south-west Jeddah. The planned gross capacity of 45,794 meets the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

The bid submission indicates that space planning within the stadium and in the surrounding area appears to accommodate most of the required spaces. During separate presentations and discussions on the stadium's design as part of the inspection visit, further details were also provided on how the stadium would integrate with its surrounding "villages" and the impact of this on operations. It appears that outside space is plentiful and that surrounding buildings could be made available for FIFA World Cup use. The relevant retail tenancies would also respect FIFA's clean site principles. This would be subject to further evaluation as planning evolves.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements, while the provision of wheelchair spaces and easy-access seating exceeds the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range and no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path, which would in any case be further mitigated by the retractable roof within the proposed design.



As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines and a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the provision of giant video screens and the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. Similar to the Qiddiya Coast Stadium, the stadium will be within close proximity to waterway inlets and the sea, and consideration must be given to minimising any potential impacts on the coastal and marine ecosystems during such development. From a legacy standpoint, the new stadium will serve as a multi-purpose venue and host two Saudi Pro League teams.

### 10 Jeddah: King Abdullah Economic City Stadium

King Abdullah Economic City Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, will be a new state-of-the-art stadium located to the north of Jeddah on the Red Sea coast. Construction is due to commence in 2027 and will be completed by 2032. The planned gross capacity of 45,700 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

In addition to the bid submission, a site visit to the stadium precinct was organised.

The bid submission indicates space would be available around the stadium to accommodate FIFA World Cup spaces and overlay structures. The hospitality villages, as presented, would not meet the requirements but space appears to be available to extend these as required. Further details have been provided on how the stadium would integrate into its surrounding area in terms of access flows and transport hubs (some of which already exist). The load-in flow study provided appears to be well planned.

The stadium orientation complies with the requirements, with the main stand located in the west.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant screens of 200m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The stadium would serve as a multi-purpose entertainment venue at the heart of the King Abdullah Economic City development after the FIFA World Cup 2034 and the stadium precinct will be open to the community to facilitate connections with nature. This should create long-lasting legacy benefits to the local community.

## 11 Riyadh: King Saud University Stadium

King Saud University Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, is the current home of the Al Nassr club and will be used to host the AFC Asian Cup 2027. A refurbishment will then commence in 2029 to temporarily increase the capacity and provide enhanced hospitality facilities. The increased capacity of 46,319 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures, although this is partially constrained by surrounding roads and buildings. Adjacent buildings on the campus, such as a sports hall, are proposed for use as the stadium media centre and volunteer centres. Some key spaces, such as the hospitality villages, do not meet the requirements as shown but there appears to be space to expand these as required.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements, as does the provision of wheelchair spaces and associated sanitary facilities. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range, and no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path.

As with all other proposed stadiums, the post-refurbishment hybrid-reinforced grass pitch with a vacuum and ventilation system would meet the requirements. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations predominantly meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, the recently installed floodlighting system is compliant with FIFA Standard A, and two giant screens (one of over 200m<sup>2</sup> and the other of approximately 60m<sup>2</sup>) are in place. The provision of IT&T systems appears to meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The existing stadium is well-used and will host the AFC Asian Cup 2027. The refurbished stadium would host university sports, including women's football, after the FIFA World Cup 2034. The upper-tier seating would be removed, resulting in a 33,000-capacity stadium with a view to longer-term legacy use. The bidder also mentions potential use by the broader community.

## 12 Riyadh: New Murabba Stadium

New Murabba Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, will be a new state-of-the-art stadium to be built in the north-west of Riyadh. The planned stadium features a roof structure design based on the native acacia tree bark and integrates with spaces in the surrounding neighbourhood. Construction is due to commence in 2025 and will be completed by 2029. The planned gross capacity of 46,010 meets the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

The extended roof structure could potentially pose some challenges in terms of the flexibility to deploy overlay solutions in the surrounding area, although it appears, conceptually, that sufficient space is available and that the roof coverage could mitigate the need to provide additional tented structures for FIFA World Cup spaces. The broadcast compound is split between outside and underground areas, which appears, conceptually, to facilitate FIFA World Cup operations.

The stadium orientation complies with the requirements, with the main stand located in the west.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating and associated sanitary facilities.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to generally meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant video screens of 200m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The stadium would be a multi-purpose entertainment venue after the FIFA World Cup 2034. The extended roof structure would also create spaces, including outdoor shaded seating and dining, that would provide long-term access and value for the surrounding community.

### 13 Riyadh: Prince Faisal bin Fahad Sports City Stadium

Prince Faisal bin Fahad Sports City Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, is currently being built as part of a wider sports and leisure masterplan and will host matches in the AFC Asian Cup 2027. The planned gross capacity of 46,865 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures. Some key spaces within the stadium, such as hospitality villages, do not meet the requirements as presented in the initial plans but it appears that these could be extended as required.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating meets the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range, and no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant video screens of 70m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The new stadium will serve as a multi-purpose venue and host a Saudi Pro League team. The current construction is being driven by the stadium's hosting of the AFC Asian Cup 2027 and it is anticipated that other tournaments would be hosted here after the FIFA World Cup 2034. From a legacy perspective, there are also plans to open the wider surrounding area to community use, which should create lasting legacy benefits.

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**14 Riyadh: ROSHN Stadium**

ROSHN Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, will be a new state-of-the-art stadium to be built in the south-west of Riyadh. The planned stadium features a crystalline structure designed to integrate with spaces in the surrounding neighbourhood. Construction is due to commence in 2028 and will be completed by 2032. The planned gross capacity of 46,000 meets the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

Similar to New Murabba Stadium, the extended roof structure could potentially pose some challenges in terms of the flexibility to deploy overlay solutions in the surrounding area, although it appears, conceptually, that sufficient space would be available and that the roof coverage could mitigate the need to provide additional tented structures for FIFA World Cup spaces. Likewise, the broadcast compound is split between outside and underground areas, which appears, conceptually, to facilitate FIFA World Cup operations. As with some other proposed stadiums, the hospitality villages do not meet the requirements as shown but space appears to be available to extend these as required. Further details are required on how the stadium would integrate into its surrounding area in terms of access flows and transport hubs.

The stadium orientation is broadly compliant, with the main stand located in the west. The impact of the sun path on the media and VIP tribunes will be factored into the development of the detailed design.

The overall availability of hospitality seating and of VVIP and VIP seating exceeds the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating and associated sanitary facilities.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant video screens of 200m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. The stadium would be repurposed as a walkable community space after the FIFA World Cup 2034. The extended roof structure would create green spaces, including outdoor shaded seating and dining, that would provide long-term access and value for the surrounding community. The stadium would also be used to host retail and entertainment experiences, including concerts and major tournaments. As such, the stadium appears to have a solid legacy purpose and would not rely exclusively on its use as a venue for football.

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**15 Riyadh: South Riyadh Stadium**

South Riyadh Stadium, proposed by the bidder for matches up to the round-of-32, will be a new stadium to be built in the south-west of Riyadh. The planned stadium will connect with the Wadi Namar park and form part of the Green Riyadh project. Construction is due to commence in 2029 and will be completed by 2032. The planned gross capacity of 47,060 exceeds the minimum requirement of 40,000 seats for a round-of-32 venue.

The bid submission indicates that space would be available around the stadium to accommodate overlay structures. Some key spaces within the stadium do not meet the requirements as shown but it appears that these can be extended as required.

The overall availability of hospitality seating meets the requirements, as does the provision of wheelchair spaces and associated sanitary facilities. The availability of VVIP and VIP seating exceeds the requirements. If the bid is successful, FIFA and the stadium authority would also collaborate to ensure the required provision of accessible seating.

The stadium orientation lies within the required range, and no significant issues are anticipated with the sun path.

As with all other proposed stadiums, a hybrid-reinforced pitch is proposed with the required vacuum and ventilation system. The field of play and the surrounding area are of the necessary dimensions.

The technical installations are expected to meet the requirements. The stadium will be served by multiple independent grid lines, a new floodlighting system compliant with FIFA Standard A will be installed, and two giant video screens of 200m<sup>2</sup> are planned. Further development of the plans is required to verify that the planned IT&T systems would meet the requirements. The stadium will also have a building management system in place.

The bidder indicates a commitment to achieving sustainable buildings and operations certification to the equivalent of LEED Gold level. From a legacy perspective, the new stadium would serve as a multi-purpose venue and host a Saudi Pro League team, whilst there are also plans to open the stadium precinct to community use.

## Conclusion


The Saudi Arabia bid contains a range of impressive stadiums which, when built or refurbished, could offer state-of-the-art infrastructure centre-stage for the hosting of FIFA World Cup matches. It is evident from the information submitted that the bidder has given consideration to the legacy uses of each stadium, whilst at the same time carefully factoring in the requirements for hosting FIFA World Cup matches into the stadium designs and plans. This balanced approach ensures that the proposed stadiums could provide a lasting benefit whilst at the same time maximising the experience for all stakeholders, including teams, fans and other guests.

As previously noted, the bidder's high ambition for innovation sees the inclusion of some new-build projects that feature novel designs and configurations. This, together with the overall scale of the stadium projects, creates a slightly elevated risk profile. Therefore it is important that, if the bid is successful, the bidder and FIFA work closely together from the very outset of each project to ensure that they can be delivered successfully and efficiently. In this respect, the ten-year lead time for planning the competition is also significant to note as a mitigating factor. Indeed, some stadium projects have already commenced (with a view to hosting the AFC Asian Cup 2027). It is also worth noting that FIFA has worked closely with each bidder during the bid preparation phase of both the FIFA World Cup 2030 and 2034 bidding processes – including multiple country visits as well as virtual and in-person workshops, to share FIFA's feedback, where appropriate, on the plans presented.

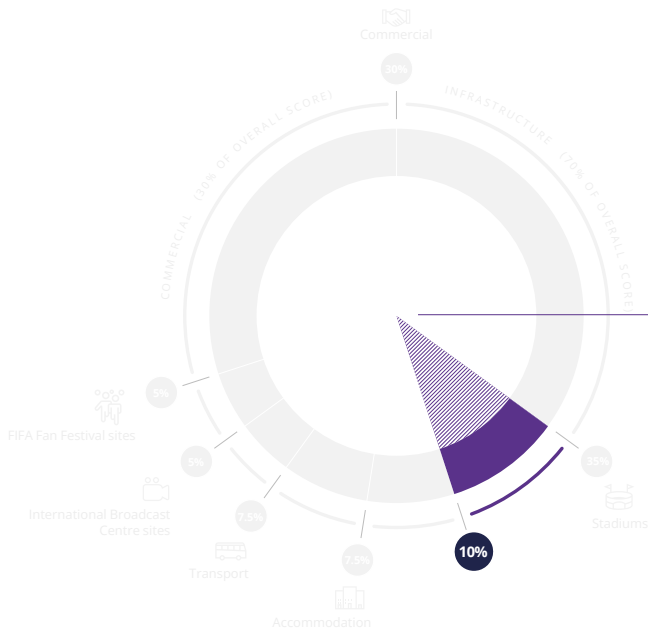
Therefore, provided FIFA and the bidder can continue this dialogue with the same constructive and positive spirit as evident throughout the bidding process, the overall bid can be assessed as offering very good stadium options for hosting the FIFA World Cup.



## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Stadiums	 Medium	<p>Overall, the bid offers very good stadium proposals for hosting the FIFA World Cup, backed by a holistic legacy concept that is also linked to the country's broader vision and strategy.</p> <hr/> <p>Due to the overall scale of the stadium projects, as well as the novel designs and configurations proposed in some cases, there is an elevated risk profile.</p> <hr/> <p>However, the quality and thoroughness of the plans developed and presented, the substantial commitment to these projects, the strong team in place to support their delivery, and the substantial lead time for planning the competition, already mitigate this substantially and provide a high degree of confidence.</p> <hr/> <p>Therefore, the overall risk for stadiums is assessed as medium.</p>

## 5.2.2 TEAM AND REFEREE FACILITIES



### Team and referee facilities

#### Team/referee hotel (50%)

Sub-criterion	Weighting
Suitability	30%
Room inventory	20%
Distance to training site	20%
Distance to airport	10%
Function rooms	10%
Additional facilities	10%

#### Training site (50%)

Sub-criterion	Weighting
Suitability	30%
Pitches	20%
Dressing rooms	10%
Press area	10%
Floodlights	10%
Stands	10%
Fitness facilities	5%
Recovery facilities	5%

### Evaluation

#### Team and referee hotels

The Saudi Arabia bid has proposed a comprehensive set of accommodation options, comprising 72 team base camp hotels, two referee base camp hotels and 60 venue-specific hotels. All hotels are paired with a training site. In total, the bid therefore contains 134 team and referee facility pairings.

The analysis of the documentation provided suggests that the proposed hotels would appear to be of a good standard and generally meet most of the requirements. This was generally confirmed through the on-site visits that took place during the course of the bidding process.

In terms of their location, several team and referee hotels (113 of the 134 to be specific) are within a 20-minute drive of their paired training site. The majority of hotels (95 of 134) are also within a 40-minute drive of an airport. A minority of hotels are located further away and therefore additional information will be required to assess their suitability. The further development of the transport infrastructure and network, which may provide improved access, will also be relevant.

Based on the bid documentation, over a third of the proposed hotels are of a size that would lend themselves to being used exclusively, while a further third would take up a significant proportion of the total rooms available, even if full exclusivity could not be guaranteed. The remaining third of the hotels are larger and measures would have to be taken to ensure the privacy of any teams staying at these properties.

Approximately half of the hotels appear to offer ample functional space, whilst several others could provide sufficient spaces for key areas. A proportion (10-15%) may require additional spaces and/or the identification of operational solutions, based on what was deemed possible during the on-site visits (i.e. through the conversion of rooms into functional areas). The vast majority of hotels also have suitable to high quality additional facilities (i.e. fitness, leisure, recovery areas).

In terms of status, 96 hotels are existing whilst 38 are planned properties. In this respect, it is important to note that each hotel owner and/or operator has executed a respective accommodation agreement that contractually commits and binds the relevant party to construct the hotels in advance of the tournament as proposed.

### *Training sites*

The training sites proposed as pairings for the team and referee base camps and venue-specific hotels appear to be of a very good standard and generally meet the requirements. This too was generally confirmed through the on-site visits that took place.

Based on the information available, the vast majority appear to meet the requirements for dressing rooms and spectator tribunals.

All team and referee base camp training sites appear to have (or will have) the required number of natural grass pitches (two for teams and four for referees) with dimensions of at least 105m x 68m. Likewise, all venue-specific training sites will have at least one natural grass pitch with dimensions of at least 105m x 68m.

In terms of technical installations, notably all training sites have (or plan) to be equipped with floodlighting of Grade 2 standard (500 lux) or more. Likewise, all sites are committed to meeting (and in most cases) exceeding the requirements with respect to media areas (i.e. for press conferences) as well as fitness and recovery facilities and spaces that are critical to ensuring an excellent team and referee experience throughout the competition.

In terms of status, 71 of the 134 proposed training sites are planned sites. It is important to note, however, that the bidder has confirmed that all necessary funding and land allocation has already been approved by the Ministry of Sport and other key stakeholders. Likewise, the bidder has confirmed that funding is secured for renovations of the existing training sites, and that such renovations are largely expected to take place in the lead-up to the AFC Asian Cup 2027, which substantially mitigate delivery risks.


Moreover, training site agreements contractually committing and binding the relevant party to construct and/or renovate the venues as proposed have all been executed and submitted as part of the bid.

Notwithstanding, it is important that these projects are monitored from initialisation through to completion. In this respect, the bidder has signalled its commitment to providing FIFA with regular updates on the progress of the construction and renovation of training sites.

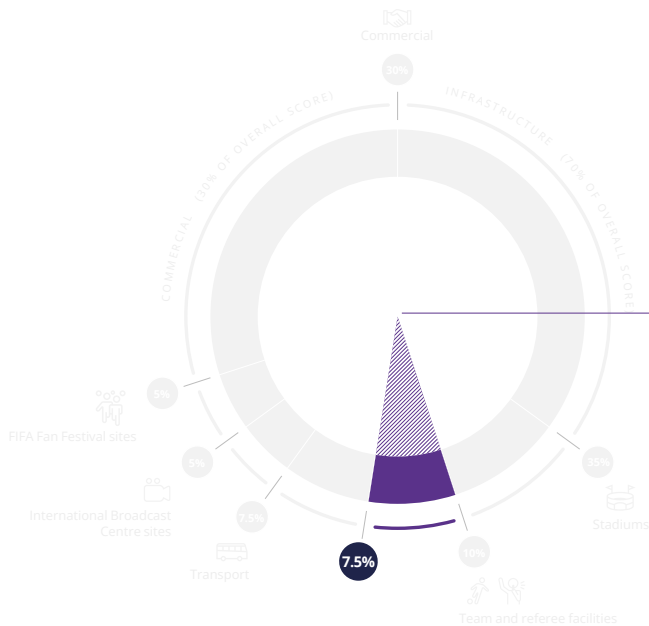
### Conclusion

Based on the bid documentation, the inspection visits and the detailed plans presented, the hotels and training sites proposed for teams and referees largely meet the requirements and would be suitable for the competition.

### Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Team and referee facilities	 Low	<p>Overall, the bidder has proposed good hotel options for team and referee hotels as well as very good training sites.</p> <hr/> <p>Whilst a proportion of the hotels and training sites are planned to or will undergo renovations and upgrades, the strong commitment to providing such properties (in terms of designs, funding, contracting, legacy plans, etc.), together with the substantial lead-in time, significantly mitigate any material risks in relation to the timely delivery of such infrastructure.</p> <hr/> <p>Nevertheless, it is important that the various projects are jointly monitored from initialisation through to completion to ensure world-class facilities for teams and referees.</p>

### 5.2.3 ACCOMMODATION



#### Accommodation

Criterion	Explanation	Weighting
FIFA core group accommodation	Analysis of the accommodation situation with a focus on stakeholders who form part of the operational delivery of the tournament.	50%
General accommodation	Analysis of the accommodation situation with a focus on a proportion of the general public generating an additional match-specific accommodation demand.	50%

#### Evaluation

The bid proposes various hotel properties across the five cities proposed to stage the competition.

Based on FIFA's assessment of the bidder's proposal, which takes into consideration existing properties as well as those planned by 2034, it appears that all proposed host cities would meet or exceed the requirements for both the FIFA core groups<sup>1</sup> and the general public, with over 390 hotels identified across the entire offering.

In terms of the standard of accommodation available and its suitability for the tournament, the bid performs very well, proposing a wide variety of options for all types of stakeholders, ranging from well-located hotels of all classifications (5-star, 4-star, 3-star, etc.) and sizes (with several in the 50-400 room range, which is particularly ideal for tournament stakeholders) to non-hotel accommodation options (e.g. Airbnb apartments) that are classified and licenced under the Ministry of Tourism, as well as further accommodation options to suit all budgets. In addition, all of the proposed properties are located within the host cities and within a reasonable distance from all key venues and locations.

With regards to hotel sourcing, over 65,000 hotel rooms have been contracted in accordance with (or in excess of) the model terms of the accommodation agreement, covering the full allocation of FIFA core groups. This unprecedented level of engagement from the market towards supporting the hosting of the competition provides additional reassurance, ten years in advance, that tournament stakeholders would have access to a large accommodation inventory under reasonable terms and conditions. Moreover, should the bid be successful, the bidder has reaffirmed its full commitment to continuing the contracting exercise with the same momentum until the delivery of the tournament.

<sup>1</sup> The FIFA core group comprises FIFA staff, VIPs and other key stakeholders (including Commercial Affiliates, host broadcaster staff and media/media rights personnel). The core group also includes the participating teams and referees, whose accommodation arrangements are separately assessed under 5.2.2 ("Team and Referee Facilities").



In terms of pricing, as an indication and based on the information available, the average guest room rates currently range from USD 70 to USD 450 for 4-star properties in Riyadh, USD 65 to USD 250 in Jeddah, and USD 53 to USD 150 in Al Khobar.

One relevant consideration in assessing the accommodation capacity is the compact footprint proposed by the bid, with multiple stadiums in the cities of Riyadh and Jeddah (eight stadiums and four stadiums respectively). This naturally centralises (and thereby increases) the demand for accommodation in those cities.

Furthermore, the bid proposes a substantial proportion of hotel properties of a planned nature<sup>2</sup>. For instance, new-build hotels represent a significant share of the allocation for FIFA core groups in each host city (e.g. 43% in Riyadh and more than 80% in Abha and NEOM). It is therefore important that the planned hotels are constructed and operational well in advance of the competition. In this respect, it is worthwhile noting that during the sites visits to Saudi Arabia, the bidder, the Ministry of Tourism and various representatives from each regional tourism authority and giga-project jointly and explicitly guaranteed their commitment to monitoring the progress of construction and ensuring the readiness and availability of the planned hotels across all five host cities. Furthermore, according to the bidder, the inventory presented only includes hotels that are registered with the Ministry of Tourism and financially guaranteed as part of the government's Vision 2030 project, which includes an extensive expansion of the total number of hotel rooms in the host cities to a targeted 230,000 rooms by 2034 in order to meet the country's anticipated growth in demand from a tourism perspective, independent of any potential hosting of the competition.

Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism outlined that it is in the process of conducting a comprehensive review of its strategy, including its hotel classification and hospitality training, to ensure a highly trained local workforce for the industry. In terms of hotel classification and specifications, the objective is to enhance and increase the homogeneity of overall hotel standards throughout the country. Since the bid submission, the classification specifications have been aligned more closely with the FIFA hotel specifications to facilitate consistency. The implementation of this new approach was observed during a specific visit to a 4-star hotel that has been newly classified under the initiative. The bidder also confirmed its openness to specific suggestions (e.g. in relation to space or facility requirements) for the hotels under construction.

## Conclusion

Based on the information provided and the site visits conducted, the accommodation inventory proposed by the bid would appear to meet or exceed the requirements. In addition, the bidder has contractually secured the commitment of an extensive portfolio of hotel properties (which already provides cover and serves as a very strong framework for the planning of the competition).

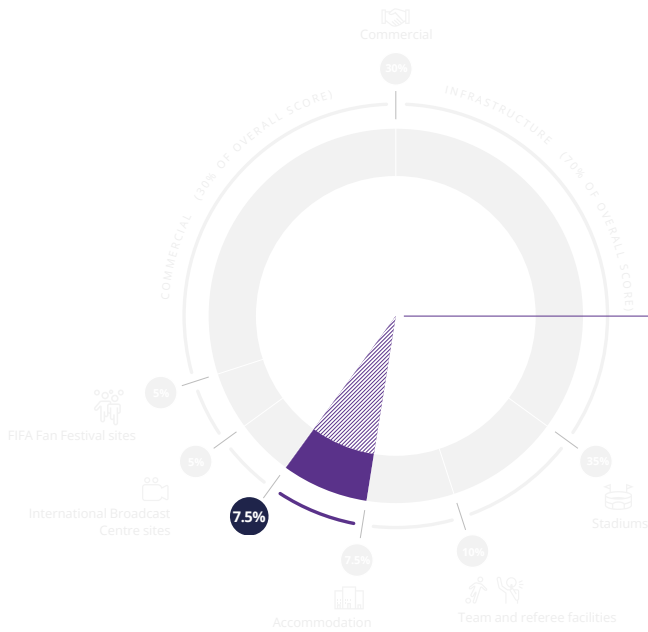
The overall scale of planned inventory proposed across the host cities and the compact footprint – which further increases the peak demand for accommodation in some key cities (e.g. Riyadh and Jeddah) – creates a slightly elevated risk profile. That said, the clear plans and commitments already in place and the ten-year lead time for planning the competition are significant to note as mitigating factors.

<sup>2</sup> The Scoring System for the Technical Evaluation of Bids notes that "In determining the applicable score for the core group and general public accommodation components of the accommodation evaluation, FIFA retains the discretion to adjust the score to factor in any of the following components which may also be relevant during tournament time... (ii) the degree/scale to which the infrastructure proposed is planned or existing..." On the basis that a material proportion of the proposed hotel inventory is planned, but recognising the 10-year lead time and the substantial number of accommodation agreements already secured, a discount factor of 10% has been applied to the overall score for accommodation.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Accommodation	 Medium	<p>The accommodation inventory proposed by the bid would appear to meet or exceed the requirements, with a wide variety of good options to cater for all types of tournament stakeholders.</p> <hr/> <p>From a sourcing perspective, the full allocation of core group accommodation has already been contracted in line with the required terms and conditions, which presents a favourable baseline for planning the competition should the bid be successful.</p> <hr/> <p>The overall scale of planned inventory proposed, coupled with the compact footprint, slightly increases the risk profile.</p> <hr/> <p>Relevant mitigating factors include the demonstrably high level of commitment from the hotel market and the tourism sector and the substantial lead time until the tournament.</p>

## 5.2.4 TRANSPORT



### Transport

Criterion	Explanation	Weighting
International accessibility	Ease with which transport infrastructure can facilitate the entry of foreign stakeholders into the host country during the FIFA World Cup 2034.	60%
Intercity connectivity	Ease of transportation between the host cities.	40%

### Evaluation

Saudi Arabia's bid is inspired by its Vision 2030, which includes a comprehensive development programme to enhance the Kingdom's overall transport infrastructure, including the expansion and development of airports, a planned high-speed railway connecting the Persian Gulf with the Red Sea, and further development of public transport services in its cities. The country is also investing considerably in tourism, which is expected to boost air travel demand and improve connectivity, supported by expanded national airline routes.

The five proposed host cities, Abha, Al Khobar, Jeddah, NEOM and Riyadh, are all located within a three-hour flight of one another, resulting in a relatively compact footprint that opens up the possibility for fans to base themselves in a single location and move between the host cities. The single-country host concept also allows for streamlined and simplified immigration and customs for tournament stakeholders.

### International accessibility

The bidder indicates that 60% of the world's population is within eight hours' travel time of the country, which would allow for relatively fast access to the tournament, with the Kingdom's proximity to established hubs like Doha and Dubai further facilitating accessibility to Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Of the five main airports proposed, Riyadh and Jeddah's airports provide the main international gateways and are considered the key points of entry, offering flights regionally and onwards to Europe, Africa, Asia and a few to the United States. Both airports have planned expansion projects aimed at significantly growing passenger traffic from 31.9 million to 80 million passengers in Riyadh, and from 43 million to 90 million in Jeddah. Riyadh plans to build a new airport, incorporating the existing King Khalid International Airport into it, and has established a new airline, Riyadh Air, anticipated to reach 100 destinations around the world. An additional terminal, and upgrades to its existing terminals, are planned for Jeddah to facilitate further traffic.

Al Khobar, a smaller international airport – although the largest in the Eastern province and Saudi's Gulf region – expects growth from its current 11 million passengers annually to 15 million, supported by a planned expansion to accommodate up to 20 million passengers. This could provide a gateway from neighbouring countries through additional tournament-specific charters for tournament stakeholders.

Abha International Airport, which currently offers four regional international destinations, has a smaller impact on international accessibility, and is likely to rely on Riyadh and Jeddah to facilitate the majority of its international traffic. It projects growth from 3.9 million to 8 million passengers by 2030.

Lastly, Saudi Arabia's newest airport, NEOM International Airport, will be built to replace the current NEOM Bay Airport, which currently services 140,000 passengers. The new airport is forecast to process 12 million passengers by 2034. Should the bid be successful, further clarification would be sought regarding the commencement of the airport's operations, as the city is still in the conceptual design phase.

International connectivity would also be supplemented (albeit to a lesser extent) by both Saudi Arabia's extensive road network, which connects eight countries on Saudi's land border, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) conventional rail line. Additional strategies proposed to increase international connectivity for the tournament include leveraging the Hajj Terminal in Jeddah used during the annual religious pilgrimage, or channelling passengers through the country's other international airports close to host cities or team base camps.

Importantly, throughout the bidding process and the site visits, extensive discussions were held with the bidder, government entities and relevant stakeholders regarding the Kingdom's commitment to the expansion projects surrounding its transport initiatives as part of Vision 2030 and the five airports proposed as part of the bid, both from an implementation and funding perspective. Furthermore, the bidder submitted Airport Agreements duly signed by each airport authority signalling such commitment towards these projects.



### Intercity connectivity

All five candidate host cities are equipped with airports which have the capacity to accommodate tournament stakeholders travelling between host cities. The frequency of flights between the cities is good, with an average flight time of just under two hours.

There are plans to extend the high-speed rail line between Al Khobar and Riyadh to Jeddah, although further clarification on the journey times would be needed should the bid be successful. The remaining host cities (Abha and NEOM) do not appear to be currently connected by either high-speed or conventional rail. That said, Saudi Arabia's intercity road network supporting intercity connectivity is excellent, although travelling by car between the cities could involve lengthy journey times.

FIFA's assessment is that the bid offers a solid level of intercity connectivity, albeit with a strong reliance on domestic air travel. With this in mind, and given the role of airports as a key mode of intercity transport as well as the importance of Riyadh and Jeddah as international points of entry, consideration should be given to managing capacity loads on these airports. Should the bid be successful, FIFA would work together closely with the bidder to elaborate on the proposed measures to facilitate transport operations.

### Host city mobility

In the case of Riyadh, the Royal Commission for Riyadh City (RCRC) has initiated major investments in the city's public transport network to address the city's reliance on personal vehicles and the associated congestion challenges. These measures include a driverless metro system, a comprehensive bus network and road network improvements. The metro system will be managed through central control centres to maximise efficiency, with certain lines due to become operational in late 2024. By 2030, it is expected to operate six lines with a daily capacity of 3.6 million passengers, connecting the city to both the airport and the King Salman International Stadium. Should the bid be successful, it will be important to carefully assess operations to ensure sufficient capacity is available on matchdays. A seventh metro line is planned to connect to the Qiddiya region, where the Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium will be located. The RCRC is also implementing a bus network with green or electric vehicles to further support public mobility, with dedicated lines along certain routes. Road capacity in Riyadh will be addressed to reduce congestion in the city, also with a view to increasing connectivity and capacity to the airport and stadiums. The city further intends to support host city mobility during the tournament by adding ten shuttle points across the city, including the airport, the proposed FIFA Fan Festival site, and the stadium in Qiddiya.

Jeddah intends to rely primarily on its bus system, enhanced with shuttles during the tournament. A high-speed rail will connect the airport with the city centre and the King Abdullah Economic City Stadium. The Jeddah City concept is still under development, therefore additional developments, such as a potential metro line, may yet occur. As in Riyadh, it will be important to ensure a robust traffic management plan is in place during the tournament to reduce traffic circulation and help mitigate road congestion.

NEOM presents a groundbreaking and innovative multi-modal transport approach utilising giant express "lifts" for vertical transport, horizontally integrated metros, and diagonal pedestrian thoroughfares to create a three-dimensional approach to mobility. The project remains in a conceptual phase, therefore it will be important that, if the bid is successful, the bidder and FIFA work closely together from the outset of the project to ensure that the infrastructure and amenities required for FIFA World Cup 2034 operations can be delivered successfully and efficiently.

Al Khobar and Abha will rely on an enhanced bus system, including shuttle services, to support mobility during the tournament.



Bus shuttle systems will be used extensively to facilitate host city mobility, with a corresponding need for adequate depots, driver accommodation and training. In this regard, the country plans to leverage the 24,000 buses and logistical knowledge of the annual Hajj pilgrimage to support operational planning and delivery.


Finally, by executing the Host City Agreements, all proposed host cities have committed to offering free use of public transport for ticket holders and accredited staff.

## Conclusion

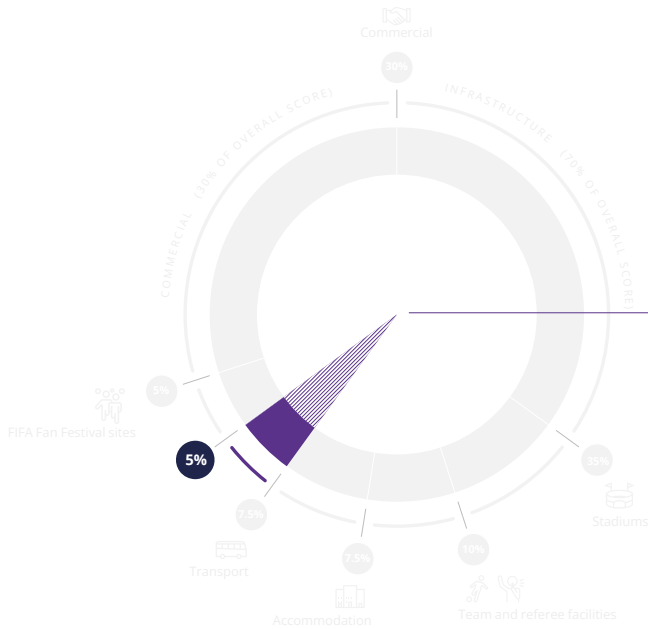
The bid sets out transport infrastructure plans to expand airports, introduce high-speed rail and enhance public transport. From an international accessibility standpoint, based on concrete plans that foresee an increase in the capacity of the airports in the proposed host cities in the years leading up to 2034, the level of international accessibility would be very good. In terms of intercity connectivity, the bid is bolstered by its compact tournament footprint, albeit with a reliance on air travel. Overall, the mobility plans in the proposed host cities appear to be adequate and one important consideration will be managing the foreseen expansion in public transport infrastructure while the stadiums are in the planning phase, which can add complexity but at the same time present opportunities to optimise operations.

As is the case for other infrastructure elements of the bid, significant transport works are still in the conceptual or early planning phase and the high ambition for innovation and overall large scale of the projects creates a slightly elevated risk profile. Should the bid is successful, the bidder and FIFA would work closely together from the outset of each project to ensure that they can be delivered successfully and efficiently. In that regard, the ten-year lead time for planning the competition is also significant to note as a mitigating factor.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Transport	 Medium	<p>Strong forecast international connectivity: Saudi Arabia will have in place modern international airports with significant passenger traffic capacity, with the cities of Riyadh and Jeddah likely serving as the key hubs.</p> <hr/> <p>Intercity connectivity options: The bid provides a solid level of intercity connectivity (particularly for Riyadh, Jeddah and Al Khobar), albeit with an expected reliance on air travel as the main mode.</p> <hr/> <p>Public transport systems in key cities: Extensive enhancements to public transport infrastructure are foreseen, such as the launch of the new metro system in Riyadh. The compact footprint with multiple stadiums in Riyadh and Jeddah brings an added level of potential complexity that would require consideration and careful planning.</p> <hr/> <p>Moreover, due to the overall scale of the various transport-related projects, as well as the novel designs in some cases, there is a slightly elevated risk profile.</p> <hr/> <p>However, the quality and thoroughness of the plans developed and presented, the substantial government commitment to these projects, the strong team in place to support their delivery, and the substantial lead time for planning the competition, mitigate this risk substantially and provide a high degree of confidence.</p>

### 5.2.5 IBC SITE



#### International Broadcast Centre (IBC)

Sub-criterion	Weighting
Suitability	25%
Size	28%
Accessibility	10%
Infrastructure	12%
Support facilities	10%
Exclusive use period	15%

### Evaluation

The Saudi Arabia bid proposes two options for hosting the International Broadcast Centre (IBC): the Qiddiya Creative District and the Riyadh Exhibition and Conference Centre, both of which are located in Riyadh.

The bid submission and supplementary documentation provide a considerable level of detail about the plans for the proposed sites, including a comprehensive list of the planned installations and support facilities. Should the bid be successful, FIFA will conduct more detailed technical visits and analysis to determine the venues' overall suitability and the most suitable option in the lead-up to the tournament. Both of the proposed venues have made a formal commitment to host the IBC by providing a signed IBC venue agreement, which provides reassurance that the required facilities would be in place by the time of the tournament.


The Qiddiya Creative District, which is set to be completed by early 2032, is planned to be located near the Equestrian, Lagoons and Resort Core Districts of Riyadh. Adjacent districts will offer entertainment, cultural and hospitality facilities including the Six Flags amusement park. The venue would offer total space of 105,100m<sup>2</sup>, comprising 57,400m<sup>2</sup> of indoor space, including three main exhibition halls, and 47,700m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space, all of which comfortably exceeds the requirements. In terms of connectivity, the venue would be located within approximately 30 minutes by metro from King Khalid International Airport and a 20-minute drive from Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium. According to the information provided, the venue would have approximately 625 parking spaces, including capacity for up to 30 passenger buses. More than 7,500 4 and 5-star hotel rooms within a 20-minute drive will be completed before 2034.

The Riyadh Exhibition and Conference Centre, which is set to be completed by 2028, is planned to be located in the King Abdulaziz Park, a large multi-terrain park with gardens and hiking trails. It is foreseen as a large venue designed to accommodate major events, conferences and exhibitions and will offer a total space of 271,700m<sup>2</sup>, comprising 123,500m<sup>2</sup> of indoor space, including eight multi-purpose exhibition halls, and 148,200m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space, which greatly exceeds the requirements for the spaces needed. In terms of connectivity, the venue would be located within an approximately 15-minute drive from King Khalid International Airport and within walking distance of King Salman International Stadium. According to the information provided, the venue would offer parking for approximately 3,400 vehicles, including 130 buses. A 5-star hotel with approximately 300 rooms is planned for the site, with other hotels operated by international chains located close by. Moreover, approximately 8,000 4-star and 5-star hotel rooms within a 20-minute drive are planned for completion before 2034.

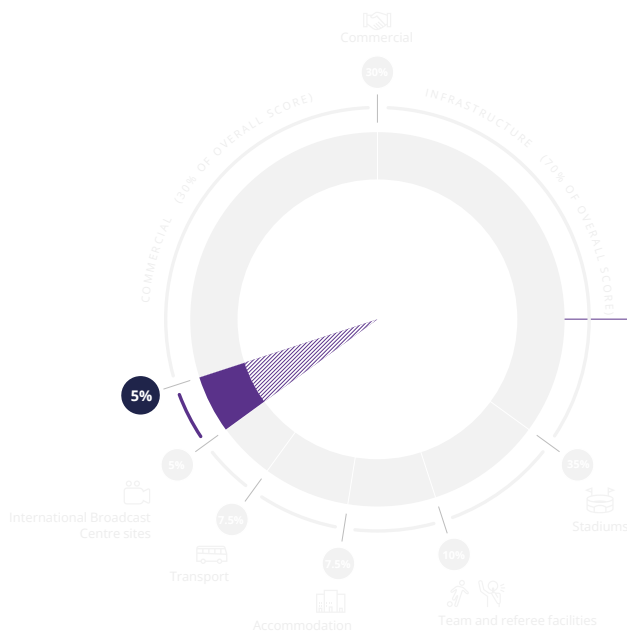
### Conclusion

Based on the bid documentation, it would appear that both proposed venues would meet the key requirements for hosting the IBC, pending successful completion of the construction work as planned by 2034. Should the bid be successful, the IBC sites will be an important area of further clarification and alignment to ensure the targeted implementation and operational readiness are realised well ahead of the start of the IBC exclusive use period.

### Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
IBC site	 Low	<p>Based on the information provided, both proposals meet the requirements for hosting the IBC site.</p> <hr/> <p>As part of the bid, formal commitments to host the IBC sites were provided by both venues in the form of a signed IBC venue agreement.</p> <hr/> <p>Should the bid be successful, more detailed technical visits and analysis will be conducted to determine the most suitable option.</p>

## 5.2.6 FIFA FAN FESTIVAL™ SITES



### FIFA Fan Festival sites

Sub-criterion	Weighting
Site capacity	35%
Site location	35%
Site security	20%
Site quality	10%

### Evaluation

The Saudi Arabia bid has proposed ten FIFA Fan Festival sites, including two for each of its five proposed host cities, and thereby meets the requirement. Of the ten venues proposed, five exist while five are still in the planning phase. For this reason, if the bid was successful, further analysis would be required to determine the suitability and operational configuration of these venues, although it is FIFA's assessment that solutions could be identified if necessary. The majority of the venues are located in the heart of their respective cities or in popular and iconic settings, within walking distance of hotels and other fan accommodation, or accessible by public transport.

In terms of the size and capacity of the proposed sites, all of the sites meet the minimum size requirements of at least 37,500m<sup>2</sup> and the minimum capacity of 15,000 people, with several of the sites comfortably exceeding the requirements. Both proposed locations in the city of Riyadh, where the final match would take place, meet the size and capacity requirements of 100,000m<sup>2</sup> and 40,000 people respectively.

Several of the proposed venues are still in the planning phase. However, according to the information provided, the existing venues have experience in hosting other events and remain flexible in terms of their potential configuration. For example, the Jeddah Waterfront has experience of hosting events such as the Formula 1® Saudi Arabian Grand Prix and the Al Dhabab Park has previously staged a fan zone.

Additional aspects of the bid that are worth highlighting include the pledge by the bidder to explore staging additional fan zones across Saudi Arabia, so that fans outside the proposed host cities could experience the atmosphere and excitement of the competition. Notably, in the case of the two large proposed sites in Riyadh, the bidder has also specified legacy plans for the use of the sites following the competition.

# Conclusion

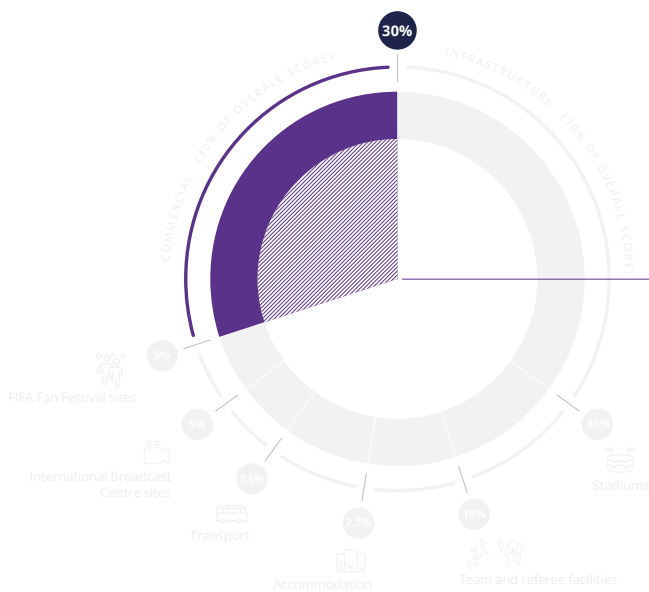
The Saudi Arabia bid has proposed a good variety of sites which would generally be suitable for hosting a FIFA Fan Festival at the FIFA World Cup 2034 and, according to the bid documentation, meet most of the requirements and characteristics sought. In the event that the bid is successful, one area for further analysis would be the sites' accessibility by public transport, as well as their proximity and connection to stadiums and other points of interest. Although several of the sites do not yet exist, FIFA and the host city have sufficient time and space to plan the detailed infrastructure and overlay requirements.

# Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
FIFA Fan Festival sites	<div> <div></div> Low </div>	<p>The Saudi Arabia bid has proposed a good variety of potential sites that would generally be suitable for hosting a FIFA Fan Festival, providing for ample choice.</p> <hr/> <p>Although several of the venues are still in the planning phase, the overall collection of proposals serves as a strong foundation for further planning.</p>



## 5.2.7 COMMERCIAL



### Commercial

Sub-criterion	Weighting
Position as against benchmark	100%
Forecast revenue and contributions – organising costs = financial position	

### Commercial – scoring scale

Score	Position as against benchmark
0.0 - 1.9	USD 0 and below benchmark
2.0 - 2.9	USD 0.1m to 250m above benchmark
3.0 - 3.9	USD 250.1m to 500m above benchmark
4.0 - 5.0	USD 500.1m to USD 750+m above benchmark

## Evaluation

### Costs

FIFA has conducted a holistic assessment of potential organising costs related to the bid (i.e. FIFA's potential tournament budget). This analysis was derived using baseline figures from previous editions of the FIFA World Cup, adapted to a 104-match format as well as a 14-stadium concept (applying the minimum number of stadiums requirement from this bidding process). This baseline was then adjusted to account for inflation, given the approximate 10-year lead-in time until the tournament takes place, whilst certain cost items considered as more sensitive to local conditions were also adjusted leveraging a comparative price level index. For the avoidance of doubt, the assessment does not include prize money, team, team participation costs or club benefits as these are not considered to be directly affected by the location of the tournament.

FIFA's potential tournament budget for the specific bid was subsequently derived by adjusting the host-country-neutral budget to account for bid-specific parameters (matches per stadium, etc.) and by appropriately adjusting cost items sensitive to local price levels. Where exact comparisons in the price index were unavailable, equivalent indicators from other markets/regions were used, together with a relevant contingency rate based on relative market conditions. For the purposes of assessing stadium-related costs, a total of 14 stadiums were assumed, with matches allocated to each stadium as per the bidder's indication. To summarise, three distinct cost items existed within the budget, adjusted as outlined in table 1 below.

**Table 1. Methodology**

Baseline	Baseline budget items	Bid specific adjustment	Description
<b>Historical FIFA World Cup budget</b> adjusted to 48 teams/104 matches, and by inflation	Fixed	-	No adjustment against baseline
	Bid-specific	± FIFA estimation	Adjustment based on bid-specific parameters
	Cost of goods and services	x Price index adjustment	Adjustment using cost indices (baseline = 100)

Based on the stated methodology, FIFA's overall organising costs were calculated to be below the baseline (by approximately USD 450 million) if the tournament were hosted in Saudi Arabia.

Key cost drivers identified include TV operations (USD 378.4 million), workforce management (USD 273.8 million), transport (USD 124.0 million), team services (USD 111.1 million) and IT&T (USD 99.5 million). When compared to the bid, deltas are driven by competitive price levels and positively impact upon areas such as technical services (USD 133.0 million below the baseline), safety and security (USD 58.9 million below the baseline) and IT&T (USD 43.3 million below the baseline). In short, virtually all cost drivers are currently forecast as being below the baseline, with some cost items, such as staffing costs, event transport, team accommodation and competition management generally expected to remain in-line with baseline levels.

### **Revenue**

In addition to forecasting costs, FIFA has evaluated potential tournament-related revenues associated with the bid. To facilitate in evaluating this, points of comparison were developed for which the individual revenue components were assessed. All such revenue components, with the exception of media and marketing rights, which was developed in conjunction with Nielsen Sport – the world's leading research and consulting company in the sports, gaming and entertainment industry and an organisation with extensive experience in assessing and valuing rights for sports properties – were directly developed on or estimated against revenue figures from historical FIFA World Cup editions. Aligned to the bid's forecast estimation of costs, revenue forecasts based on historical FIFA World Cup editions were adjusted to 48 teams and 104 matches, and further set to account for inflation and, where applicable, for edition-on-edition growth.

**Table 2. Commercial methodology and baseline summary**

Component	Bid	Baseline
<b>Media and marketing rights</b>	Average of [low] and [high] estimates provided by Nielsen	Mid-point of estimates
<b>Ticketing</b>	[Sold capacity*] × [ticket price]	Based on actuals from previous FIFA World Cup editions, adjusted to 2034.
<b>Hospitality</b>	[Sold hospitality capacity*] × [hospitality mark-up]	
<b>Licensing and retail</b>	[Estimated onsite sales] + [estimated online sales] + [estimated licensing sales]	
<b>Food and beverage</b>	[Sold capacity*] × [estimated per-capita spend]	

(\*) **Sold capacity** = [usable capacity] × [match count] × [sell-through rate]; where **usable capacity** = [stadium capacity] – [reductions and reserves]

With respect to revenue generated from media and marketing rights, as previously noted, FIFA partnered with Nielsen Sports to develop a forecast for such potential revenue streams derived from the tournament, if organised in the bidding country. The assessment encompassed both sponsorship revenues (derived through a bottom-up valuation) and media rights revenue (derived through a top-down assessment by leveraging historical fees from past editions to estimate cost per viewer hour). The following table briefly summarises the methodology used to estimate the final bid forecast.

**Table 3. Summary of media and marketing methodology**

Bottom-up valuation	Media rights revenue
<b>Bottom-up valuation</b> Ultimately based on audience, calculated by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Modelling assumed audience</li> <li>2. Estimating TV media value</li> <li>3. Applying ratio between value and audience</li> <li>4. Converting to total asset value and estimating a return on investment</li> </ol>	<b>Top-down valuation</b> Fair market value of acquiring the rights on a 'cost per viewer hour' basis, using a benchmark against previous editions, where: <i>Implied rights value</i> = [forecast viewer hours] × [average cost per viewer hour]

Based on the assessment, the bid is forecast to result in a growth in the global live TV audience of roughly 10% when measured against the upcoming edition. The media and marketing rights value benefits from a relatively advantageous time zone (including very strong viewership potential in the Middle East and North Africa region), as well as state-of-the-art venues whose infrastructure can also positively contribute to partnership value.

In assessing ticketing and hospitality revenues, FIFA established a total tournament inventory (in the order of 5 million) by leveraging information provided by the bidder outlining capacities and suggested match categories for each stadium. The gross inventory for each stadium was subsequently reduced in line with FIFA's hosting and internal requirements to facilitate direct comparison against a baseline established on historical FIFA World Cup performance. Such reductions were applied uniformly across all stadiums and resulted in a net tournament purchasable inventory.

To estimate the gross revenue, the purchasable inventory was multiplied by approximated attendance rates and ticket/hospitality prices, resulting in a gross revenue for every admission category, at each stadium, and for each match category. For the Saudi Arabia bid, FIFA forecast gross revenues to exceed the estimated baseline by approximately 32% (equating to more than USD 240 million), broadly driven by the substantial hospitality footprint proposed by the bid (where in some cases a cap of 25% was applied to reflect a more suitable split between general admission and hospitality). The net position was subsequently estimated by multiplying gross revenues by historical average margin rates and accounting for key cost items embedded in the tournament budget.

In addition to ticketing and hospitality revenues, FIFA has evaluated other venue-related revenues such as licensing and retail as well as food and beverage. For revenues relating to licensing and retail, the assessment was split based on on-site, online and licensing revenue streams. Against a baseline established on historical FIFA World Cup actuals adjusted to 2034, the bid was forecast to slightly outperform the baseline (by approximately USD 7 million) on all licensing and retail revenue streams due to the favourable results expected, in particular for on-site and online sales. For food and beverage, the baseline was calculated using historical data from past editions in relation to per-capita spend (also adjusted forward to 2034). The bid was then compared against the baseline using estimated low and high per-capita spend rates, from which the average was taken in forecasting the overall result. In cases where FIFA perceived a higher degree of uncertainty in its ultimate utilisation of concession spaces, a contingency on the bid's per-capita spend rate was applied. Total food and beverage concessions were then derived by multiplying total assumed tournament general admission attendance with the average per-capita spend rate based on assumed match allocations by venue, resulting in the bid performing comparable to the baseline. Ultimately, though, it should be noted that the delta from these venue-related revenue streams only marginally impacts upon the overall assessment.

### Conclusion

In summary, based on the analysis conducted, the bid is expected to perform strongly, in particular driven by high-quality venues with substantial premium offerings. In conjunction with a tournament budget that is assessed as substantially below the baseline, FIFA believes the bid presents a strong commercial position.

### Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Commercial	<div> <div></div> <div>Low</div> </div>	<p>The bid presents a strong commercial position overall, with solid revenues and particularly strong hospitality inventory.</p> <hr/> <p>The organising costs are assessed as being substantially below the baseline.</p>

## 5.3 RISK ASSESSMENTS

### 5.3.1 COMPETITION-RELATED EVENT SITES

#### Evaluation

##### *Final Draw*

The bidder proposes to host the Final Draw in THE LINE Convention Center in NEOM, a venue which has still to be constructed. The proposed venue would be located approximately 30 minutes from NEOM International Airport by high-speed rail and provide attendees with the option of using Autonomous Rapid Transit vehicles to move between the key areas of the venue. Upon its construction, THE LINE would cover a surface area of 50,000m<sup>2</sup>, with capacity for 3,500 guests inside the draw hall, both of which would exceed the requirements for staging the Final Draw.

##### *FIFA Congress*

The bidder proposes to host the FIFA Congress in the King Abdulaziz International Conference Center in Riyadh, a prominent venue which includes a variety of conference halls, meeting rooms, lounges and suites. The bidder proposes to dedicate two large ballrooms in the Conference Center for the FIFA Congress and its accompanying activities. The venue is situated approximately a 45-minute drive from King Khalid International Airport and within a short drive of many hotels. The main hall in which the bidder proposes to host the FIFA Congress has a surface area of 4,800m<sup>2</sup> and capacity for 2,500 guests, both of which would meet the requirements for staging the FIFA Congress.


##### *Team Workshop*

The bidder proposes to host the Team Workshop in Maraya, a multi-purpose event centre in the historical city of AlUla. The venue is located approximately a 40-minute drive from AlUla International Airport. Maraya's main auditorium offers a surface area of 1,777m<sup>2</sup> as well as capacity for 600 guests, both of which would meet the requirements for staging the Team Workshop. The city of AlUla offers guests accommodation facilities in 4 and 5-star hotels and the bidder estimates that more than 6,500 guest rooms will be available in the city by 2034.

#### Conclusion

For each of the three competition-related events, the bidder has proposed large-scale venues equipped with state-of-the-art facilities, which are likely to meet the respective requirements in each case. Given that the bidder has proposed a venue for the Final Draw which has not yet been built, the progress of construction would have to be monitored carefully.

#### Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Competition-related event sites	 Low	<p>The specifications of the venues proposed by the bidder meet the hosting requirements for each competition-related event.</p> <p>Given that the proposed venue for the Final Draw has not yet been built, the progress of construction would have to be monitored carefully.</p>



### 5.3.2 SAFETY AND SECURITY

#### Evaluation

The Saudi Arabia bid provides a reasonable level of detail on the safety and security arrangements that would be in place if it were selected to host the FIFA World Cup 2034.

Notably, the bidder has submitted a full government guarantee on safety and security committing to such deliverables and requirements, which helps to demonstrate that sufficient infrastructure and resources would be made available to ensure the security of the tournament.

There is a clear designation of the basic safety and security structures, including the roles and responsibilities of the relevant state authorities in Saudi Arabia to cover matters such as national, civil and transport security, public order, crisis management, cybersecurity and all matters relating to stadiums and participating teams and officials. A heavy emphasis is placed on state security authorities at all levels of the proposed framework.

In terms of safety and security measures at football matches, Saudi Arabia appears to have the necessary stadium safety and security frameworks and arrangements in place. The bidder indicates that it intends to comply with the provisions of the FIFA Stadium Safety & Security Regulations.

While the bidder states that private security and stewards are already being deployed surrounding and during football matches in the country, security at stadiums is primarily led by state security agencies as part of a "Permanent Security Committee". A key aspect to realising FIFA's safety, security and service vision would be to utilise the strengths and adequate resources of both public and private sectors. Should the bid be successful, the development, capability and capacity-building of public-private partnerships in line with the safety, security and service vision for the FIFA World Cup would have to be expanded upon in due course.

The bid includes high-level information about the specific safety and security strategy to be developed for the tournament. If selected, additional information would be sought regarding the strategy's further development and refinement, with a particular emphasis on scalability.

While the country does have existing structures and a track record of successfully delivering sporting events, including a FIFA tournament, the scale and complexity of hosting the FIFA World Cup are significant. One substantial risk is the capacity and capability development in terms of the human resources required to meet the tournament requirements. The bid also involves several new stadiums which are yet to be operationalised. Consequently, should the bid be successful, the tournament's safety and security strategy should include comprehensive details of the significant capacity-building efforts required in human resources and operational management.


Finally, the country possesses strong counterterrorist capabilities and a strong commitment to investment in modern security.

The bidder expresses a desire to invest heavily in new technologies in response to various risks, and with a view to leaving a legacy for public safety in the country. Likewise, the bidder anticipates a legacy effect in terms of raising standards in the safety and security management of stadiums and in the private security industry in general.

## Conclusion

Saudi Arabia has put forward a framework and foundation that would allow for the development and implementation of a safety and security strategy that meets the requirements. Commendably, the country demonstrates a strong commitment to invest in establishing lasting benefits for public safety in Saudi Arabia. This includes cybersecurity as well as physical security technology and equipment.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Safety and security	 Low	<p>The framework and foundation proposed in the bid would allow for the development and implementation of a safety and security strategy that meets the requirements.</p> <hr/> <p>Saudi Arabia offers robust counterterrorism capabilities to mitigate the risk of a terrorist attack.</p> <hr/> <p>While the country has a track record of successfully delivering sporting events, given the scale of the FIFA World Cup and the development of new stadiums not yet operationalised, investment in capacity building and testing could be focus areas in the planning of the competition.</p>

### 5.3.3 HEALTH, MEDICAL AND ANTI-DOPING

#### Evaluation

Based on the information provided by the bid and additional information gathered by FIFA, there are clear indications that Saudi Arabia would be able to provide the level of medical infrastructure required to host the tournament successfully.

Saudi Arabia has a well-established healthcare system that has delivered care at previous large sports events, at the FIFA Club World Cup and at other large events. As a result, the country has extensive experience of providing services to large crowds over several weeks at a time.

The use of the government's healthcare system and of private providers would offer sufficient capacity of an international standard to assist participating teams and visitors to the FIFA World Cup 2034 with all their health and medical needs.

There is adequate tertiary-level private hospital care capacity to cover serious conditions in all the proposed host cities. Emergency departments and trauma units are well prepared and supported by advanced life support ambulances. Dedicated cubicles and wards for tournament participants would be set up. Emergency care, trauma units, neurosurgery, cardiology (incl. interventional) and orthopaedic surgery are available in each host city in various facilities. The hospital lists for each host city are extensive. The country has a combination of government and private healthcare systems that can be accessed quickly and easily. The government provides travel health insurance to all visitors that would cover all emergency care. For other services, it is recommended that visitors arrange their own travel insurance.

No major infectious disease or other public health threats exist at this point (however, as with any FIFA World Cup host country, this is a situation that would have to be monitored in the lead-up to the tournament in 2034). There are no specific vaccination requirements beyond the usual recommendations for travellers.

Given the temperature levels in certain cities at certain times of the year, the topic of climatic conditions is addressed as a material consideration in section 5.3.5 Event Timing.


The plan described to ensure comprehensive, premium-quality sports medicine services exceeds the requirements, and care would only have to be taken to respect and integrate the team doctor within this system.

Finally, regarding anti-doping measures, the bid confirmed its compliance with the requirements set by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

## Conclusion

From the perspective of health and medical services, the Saudi Arabia bid meets the requirements. The country has vast experience with mass gatherings, an established emergency care system, medical facilities of a high standard, and plans to expand its sports medicine services. Saudi Arabia also has experience of providing high standard services to teams and guests from the FIFA Club World Cup 2023. Regarding climatic conditions and temperatures – see section 5.3.5 Event Timing. Should the global, regional or local epidemiological situation or the healthcare system and environmental and economic situation in the country, change in the coming years, reassessment would be required closer to the event.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Health, medical and anti-doping	 Low	<p>Saudi Arabia has provided complete and comprehensive medical documentation. Overall, the standards of medical care and of the providers and facilities are high. The country has ample experience with mass-gathering events and routinely provides health insurance covering emergency care to all visitors. Emergency service and hospital capacities are adequate, indicating substantial surge capacity for mass emergencies and allowing for contingency planning.</p> <hr/> <p>Saudi Arabia's recent hosting of the FIFA Club World Cup 2023 has added specific FIFA tournament experience to its healthcare providers' portfolio, with the requirements at the stadiums and training sites already known.</p> <hr/> <p>Climatic conditions and temperatures are discussed in section 5.3.5 Event Timing.</p>

### 5.3.4 IT&T

#### Evaluation

##### *Telecommunications*

The Saudi Arabia bid describes a very good level of international connectivity in general, as well as candidate host cities that are well connected to telecommunications services and generally have up-to-date mobile coverage. The Kingdom's IT&T capabilities have benefited from major recent expansion and modernisation, with fixed broadband via fibre-optic cabling (FTTH) forecast to reach 80% of all households by 2030.

In terms of the mobile telecommunications services that would be available, the bid documentation indicates that Saudi Arabia today has 98% 4G and 57% 5G population coverage and will reach 99% 5G coverage by 2034. In 2023, the Kingdom was ranked among the top 10 countries worldwide in mobile internet speed. There is relatively little disparity in terms of fixed and mobile coverage among the proposed cities in the bid.

Saudi Arabia has provided government guarantees relating to IT&T. This includes the provision of the necessary infrastructure as stipulated in the hosting requirements and services aligned with those provided for previous events of the magnitude of a FIFA World Cup.

##### *Stadium infrastructure*

Given that ten of its 15 proposed stadiums have still not been constructed, Saudi Arabia has proposed limited information at this early stage about the IT&T infrastructure at the stadiums. However, each stadium makes assurances that the build or upgrade will meet the event requirements in each case and this forms part of the government guarantee.


The Kingdom's impressive plans set out in the bid submission to upgrade its core network in its host cities and throughout the country will help support stadium connectivity. The bidder indicates that all major sites and sports facilities involved in the FIFA World Cup 2034 will have state-of-the-art fibre-optic cabling networks in place before the tournament begins, connecting the stadiums, airports and competition-related sites.

Of the existing stadiums, the IT&T infrastructure at the King Saud University Stadium and the King Abdullah Sports City Stadium is of a good standard and meets the event requirements, with the infrastructure at the latter stadium having been used successfully for the FIFA Club World Cup 2023.

#### Conclusion

The existing stadiums have good IT&T infrastructure and comply with the event requirements. While information about the planned infrastructure in the stadiums that will be constructed (or upgraded) is limited at this early stage, assurances have been made in the government guarantee relating to IT&T that the requirements would be met. Should the bid be successful, IT&T infrastructure – both from a general telecommunication and stadium specific perspective – will be an important area of further clarification and alignment as further designs and plans are developed.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
IT&T	 Low	<p>The IT&amp;T infrastructure in the existing stadiums meets the event requirements.</p> <hr/> <p>The bidder has provided assurances in the government guarantee that the infrastructure in the stadiums that are set for construction (or upgrading) will meet the requirements.</p>

### 5.3.5 EVENT TIMING

#### Evaluation

When it comes to the timing of the competition, the bid does not stipulate a proposed window but rather pledges that it will prioritise collaboration with FIFA and its stakeholders to ensure the tournament's success, factoring in a number of considerations ranging from climatic conditions to the schedule of football and other sporting and cultural events locally and globally. This is important given that the FIFA Men's International Match Calendar has yet to be defined through to 2034 when the competition would take place.

In terms of climatic conditions, the bidder states that temperatures in Saudi Arabia are at their mildest between October and April, when average daily temperatures in the proposed host cities are between 15°C and 30°C. The bidder indicates in the bid book that average daily temperatures range from 17°C to 38°C between May and September, although peak daytime temperatures can reach substantially higher (for instance, based on the information provided by the bidder, temperatures can exceed 40°C at the hottest times of the day in Riyadh during the summer months of June and July). Consequently, should the bid be successful, any decision regarding the timing of the competition would take these matters into consideration when seeking to provide optimal conditions for teams and spectators.

When it comes to the schedule of football and other sporting and cultural events locally, the Saudi Pro League is currently aligned with other leagues in the Northern Hemisphere, playing from August to May. It is also worth noting that in 2034, Riyadh will host the Asian Games – one of the largest multi-sport events in the world. On both points, the bidder has confirmed its commitment to working closely with FIFA and all related stakeholders (i.e. the Olympic Council of Asia) to ensure all events can successfully coexist.


Furthermore, it would be important to consider religious events in determining the timeline for the competition. Ramadan, the annual Muslim period of fasting and prayer, and the yearly Hajj pilgrimage, when more than 1.5 million pilgrims travel to Saudi Arabia from around the world, would have to be taken into account, as would the Christmas to New Year period in late December and early January. The bidder also refers in the bid book to "Saudi Seasons", a series of cultural, sporting and entertainment events that draws millions of spectators to cities across the Kingdom throughout the year.



## Conclusion

Taking into consideration local climatic conditions as well as the local calendar of sporting and cultural events taking place in 2034, the exercise of identifying the optimal window for the competition brings with it some complexities. Nevertheless, the substantial lead-in time to arrive at a Men's International Match Calendar for 2034 and the flexibility and spirit of collaboration demonstrated by the bidder serve as partially mitigating factors.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Event timing	 Medium	<p>The bidder does not stipulate a proposed window but pledges to collaborate closely with FIFA and its stakeholders to determine the optimal timing for the competition.</p> <hr/> <p>In light of the climatic conditions and the calendar of football and other key sports and cultural events locally set out in the information provided by the bidder, the bid has been assessed as presenting an elevated risk in terms of event timing.</p> <hr/> <p>However, the substantial lead-in time to 2034 and the flexibility demonstrated by the bidder serve as mitigating factors.</p>

## 5.3.6 SUSTAINABILITY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

### Sustainability commitment

The bid is presented in the context of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, of which sustainability and human rights-related topics are an integral part.

The bidder's commitment is demonstrated throughout the bid book and provided in a clear public commitment statement to sustainability, human rights, sustainable procurement and climate action:

"Hosting the FIFA World Cup 2034™ will create a lasting impact on sustainable development and rights protections for Saudi Arabia and the region, fostering a positive legacy that extends beyond the Competition."

The bidder explicitly states that it would work with FIFA to develop and implement a robust Sustainability Strategy and support FIFA with the implementation of the sustainable event management system for the competition, which would be aligned with ISO 20121 and cover all areas outlined in the FIFA Sustainable Tournament Requirements, including FIFA's tobacco policy. It would comply with all requirements detailed in the FIFA Sustainable Sourcing Code and any additional competition-specific sourcing requirements, and it would work to integrate climate action into tournament delivery in alignment with the FIFA Climate Strategy, national targets and Saudi Arabia's commitment to the Paris Agreement.

The bidder further states that it would work to ensure that every aspect of preparing and hosting the FIFA World Cup 2034 adheres to Saudi Arabia's commitments to various international standards for promoting and protecting human rights, and embraces the culture and values of Saudi Arabia. It would focus thereby on the most prominent topics connected with preparing and hosting mega sporting events: labour rights, diversity and anti-discrimination, accessibility, safeguarding and security.

In developing the bid, stakeholders from across the Kingdom were engaged as part of developing the sustainability and human rights proposals, and the bidder has provided a clear public commitment to stakeholder engagement, stating that it would liaise with the tournament's stakeholders in alignment with the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard (AA1000SES) and establish a thorough process that helps it manage human rights and sustainability topics key to delivering a responsible and respectful tournament. This engagement would cover all phases of the competition, commencing with the bidding process and extending to preparation and delivery.

## Human rights

By way of introduction, there are two important observations which form part of the context of the evaluation. Firstly, the introduction of human rights as a criterion for evaluating bids followed the recommendations of the April 2016 report of Professor John G. Ruggie – one of the leading experts on the topic of human rights, a former UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Business and Human Rights and the architect of the UN Guiding Principles of Business and Human Rights – regarding best practices in incorporating respect for human rights across FIFA's activities. This report, which recommended the inclusion of human rights within its criteria for evaluating bids, made clear that "This is about making decisions based on evidence of how effectively bidders intend to address human rights risks connected with a tournament. It is not about peremptorily excluding countries based on their general human rights context". Therefore, the documentation submitted by the bidder together with the concrete commitments made by relevant stakeholders form integral parts of how the bid is assessed.

In addition, the Overview of Hosting Requirements emphasises that "FIFA will take into consideration not only a bid's adherence to core requirements but also its commitment to drive positive environmental and social change over the medium-to long-term horizon, with an understanding that all aspects cannot be applied or examined in a standardised manner but also depend on the prevailing context of the host country/host countries". In this respect, both the realised and potential rate of progress in terms of positive social change can be regarded as relevant considerations.

Turning to the content submitted, in its bid book and other bidding documents, the bidder commits to upholding international human and labour rights in the full life cycle of the competition. As such, it aims to build upon Saudi Arabia's ongoing transformation under Vision 2030 to manage risks and maximise the positive social impacts of the tournament and embed human rights across all tournament-related operations.

Supporting this commitment, and in line with the requirements, the bidder has submitted a set of assessments, commitments and strategies in relation to human rights. This includes an independent Human Rights Context Assessment ("Context Assessment") conducted by AS&H Clifford Chance. The bidder has also submitted a Human Rights Strategy, which also takes into consideration the findings of the Context Assessment and commits to a set of measures to address human rights impacts associated with the tournament.

The bidder has also submitted commitments from the host country and all host cities. These include the government's commitment to respecting, protecting and fulfilling internationally recognised human rights in connection with the competition, including in the areas of safety and security, labour rights (in particular fundamental labour rights and

those of migrant workers), rights of children, gender equality and non-discrimination, as well as freedom of expression (including press freedom).

Furthermore, the bidder has submitted all contractual hosting documents (i.e. host city agreements, stadium agreements, airport agreements, training site agreements, IBC agreements, accommodation agreements, etc.) covering the entire tournament footprint, all of which contain provisions relating to respecting human rights in connection with the competition.

In relation to labour rights, the Context Assessment recognises progress in legal labour protections in Saudi Arabia over the past years. It highlights areas where further legal reforms are needed and makes reference to the need for effective enforcement, without which the risk of indecent working conditions could be elevated.

In the bid's Human Rights Strategy, the bidder commits to ensuring equitable wages and decent working and living conditions for all individuals involved in the preparation and delivery of the FIFA World Cup, including through the establishment of a workers' welfare system to monitor compliance with labour rights standards for tournament-related workers. The Human Rights Strategy also includes commitments to continued country-wide labour reform. In that respect, the host government commits to engaging with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in relation to its commitment to upholding international labour standards in all activities associated with the competition and to favourably consider a collaboration with the ILO in that respect.

Clarification was sought on existing and plans for collaboration with the ILO. The bidder confirmed that there is an existing cooperation program in place and that meetings and visits with the ILO were held this year regarding further cooperation to ensure a decent work environment in the context of hosting the competition, should the bid be successful.

The effective protection of tournament-related workers would depend on the timely implementation (or otherwise) of a continued reform agenda, as well as the establishment of robust workers' welfare systems to protect workers connected to tournament infrastructure. Through the implementation of these commitments, there is also the potential for the tournament to help contribute to ongoing labour reforms that benefit workers far beyond those involved in tournament-related activities.

Clarification was sought on whether the proposed worker's welfare system proposed under the Human Rights Strategy has already been implemented for the stadiums where construction/refurbishment has commenced (given some will be part of the AFC Asian Cup 2027). The bidder confirmed this is the case and further elaborated on various measures being taken to improve the labour welfare system for current workers, which is encouraging.

With regard to diversity and anti-discrimination, the Context Assessment mentions various laws and regulations in Saudi Arabia that encourage diversity and encompass elements to combat discrimination. It also notes gaps and reservations in the implementation of relevant international standards, in particular where they are seen to contradict Islamic law.

As part of the Human Rights Strategy, the bidder commits to ensuring a secure and inclusive tournament environment free from discrimination through the implementation of policies, procedures and educational measures to address discrimination in the tournament context. The bidder also commits to reviewing and potentially amending relevant legislation as part of the government's commitments under international standards.

The commitments by the bidder are informed by the wider process of societal opening of Saudi Arabia as part of Vision 2030. The proposed event-time measures have the potential to effectively address many of the risks of

discrimination at the competition. In addition to implementing the proposed measures and legal reforms, implementing the bid's commitments would also require the communication of a strong welcoming message.

When it comes to accessibility, the Context Assessment points to the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is part of what United Nations entities consider a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities in Saudi Arabia. It highlights some areas requiring further attention in the context of the tournament, such as sign language, accessible websites, complaints mechanisms as well as law enforcement processes.

In the Human Rights Strategy, the bidder commits to ensuring that tournament facilities and services are accessible to disabled people in accordance with the accessibility requirements and other international standards. The plans outlined by the bidder include, for example, taking the necessary measures to include accessibility requirements in the planning and construction of tournament infrastructure and evaluating the potential of assistive technologies in enhancing the tournament experience of disabled people.

The bid documents show a strong commitment to the continued enforcement of measures to protect disability rights in Saudi Arabia as well as to implementing a robust programme specific to the competition.

On the topic of safeguarding, the Context Assessment provided by the bidder aligns with international standards, drawing on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the FIFA Guardians Child Safeguarding Toolkit, and the IOC Framework for Safeguarding Athletes. Saudi Arabia's laws, including the Child Protection Law, reflect these commitments by prohibiting harmful activities involving children and ensuring their well-being. The bid includes a commitment to adopt and implement FIFA's safeguarding policies throughout the event.

The strategy includes the implementation of robust safeguarding policies, mandatory training for all personnel, confidential reporting systems and continuous risk assessments. It also emphasises collaboration with local and international agencies to protect vulnerable groups of all ages, genders and levels of sport, ensuring compliance with global safeguarding standards.

While the proposed measures demonstrate a comprehensive approach to safeguarding, their effectiveness would hinge on rigorous enforcement. Additionally, it is crucial to recognise that safeguarding is not limited to children but must encompass individuals of all ages and genders, across all levels of sport. Continuous monitoring and external oversight is critical to ensuring these measures are fully realised and effective.

As it concerns security, the Context Assessment points to relevant national regulations on the conduct of security agencies. This includes the Declaration of Human Rights for the Gulf Cooperation Council, which is enforceable in Saudi Arabia and contains prohibitions against arbitrary arrest or detention as well as acts of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. The Context Assessment also refers to reservations by the United Nations Committee Against Torture around due process matters in judicial proceedings. In addition, it identifies potential risks involved in the operation of private security contractors.

The Human Rights Strategy provided by the bidder includes a commitment to ensuring the safety of all participants and attendees, whilst abiding by international security standards. This comprises a commitment to ensuring that the country's penal code and respective criminal procedures relating to detention and fair trial align with best practice and international standards, and the implementation of surveillance protocols that respect the privacy and human rights of attendees. It also involves plans to implement measures to ensure adherence to the principles of necessity and proportionality during public law enforcement and private security activities.

Based on United Nations reports, the effective embedding of human rights principles into law enforcement processes and operations in line with international standards and commitments made in the bid would likely take significant effort and time. However, the event-time measures to embed human rights principles in security operations outlined in the strategy provide a basis for the implementation of such a programme by 2034.

Finally, with regard to freedom of expression and the press, United Nations reports have previously referenced gaps in legislation to ensure full legal protections of freedom of expression, both online and offline. The United Nations also asked the Saudi authorities to adopt enhanced measures to protect journalists and human rights defenders.

As part of the bid documentation, the host authorities have committed to ensuring freedom of expression, including press freedom, in all activities associated with the tournament. In the Human Rights Strategy, the bidder commits to developing a framework to empower civil society and advance its role and engagement to positively contribute to the preparation and hosting of the competition. It also commits to verifying that the policies and practices of the tournament hosts enable both the proper operation of local and international media and the implementation of possible required enhancements.

Based on United Nations reports, implementing the measures proposed in the bid and addressing potential gaps with respect to freedom of expression would likely take significant effort and time. However, the event-time measures to guarantee these rights provide a basis for implementation by 2034.

Overall, the undertaking involved in implementing the various measures outlined in the Human Rights Strategy, particularly in certain areas, could involve significant effort and time, giving rise to a risk rating in this regard which has been reflected in the assessment accordingly. That said, FIFA recognises the substantial efforts that went into preparing the human rights-related submissions of the bid as well as the concrete commitments made by the bid and all local stakeholders. This provides the foundation from which FIFA, together with its local partners, would work to develop systems to address risks associated with the tournament, should the bid be successful. There too, the timeframe for implementation of 10 years as well as the rate of progress seen in past years, is a relevant consideration.

Moreover, it is important to note that the bid involves significant opportunities for positive human rights impact. The bid places the tournament preparation and delivery in the context of the country's wider reform agenda under Vision 2030 and includes several commitments related to these reforms. There is a good potential that the tournament could serve as a catalyst for some of the ongoing and future reforms and contribute to positive human rights outcomes for people in Saudi Arabia and the region that go beyond the scope of the tournament itself.

### Environmental protection

Vision 2030 incorporates Saudi Arabia's existing commitment to sustainability as a country, and is supported by national environmental targets. As part of Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia is diversifying its historically oil-based economy and elevating sports, as well as tourism and technology, amongst others, to a top-priority sector.

The bid to host the FIFA World Cup 2034 articulates an understanding of the key impact that the preparation and hosting of the tournament would have on the environment and climate. In accordance with the hosting requirements, the bid documentation outlines several measures to minimise the impact of the tournament on the environment and climate, and to mitigate the impact of stadium infrastructure, transport, accommodation, energy consumption and waste.

Whilst the scale and extent of construction work would have a material environmental impact, the bidder proposes using existing buildings and infrastructure where feasible. Four existing stadiums are proposed which are being/would be renovated to meet the growing demand for world-class facilities within Saudi Arabia, as well as meet the hosting requirements. Three stadiums are already under construction, and eight stadiums are already planned as part of



Saudi Arabia's long-term stadium strategy, which is guided by its sporting and entertainment strategies, as well as its National Football Strategy. The location of new stadium infrastructure has been decided using three criteria with sustainability and legacy in mind: long-term demand for event venues; broader community and regeneration impact; and easy transport accessibility. The bidder's proposed mitigation measures to design new and planned buildings and infrastructure for durability, climate change resilience, and long-term use along with achieving sustainable building certification, as well as plans to promote water conservation and protect biodiversity, could reduce the impact.

All stadiums have plans to achieve sustainable building certification (e.g. LEED, Mostadam) for both design and build and for renovation (if appropriate) and operations, as per the requirements. A few of the stadiums that are under construction/planned are within close proximity of waterway inlets and/or the sea. Care would have to be taken to minimise impacts on the coastal and marine ecosystem during their build and operational phases. The bidder also promises that all new training site facilities, to complement the large number of potential training sites that already exist, would be developed with sustainability principles in mind, in terms of construction and usage. Similarly, to meet the requirements, the training sites would also need to achieve sustainable building certification for design and build and for renovation (if appropriate) and operations.

In terms of getting to tournament sites, fans would be able to travel to the five host cities via air, sea, road or rail. The multiple stadiums located in Riyadh and Jeddah would entail reduced inter-city travel. It is noted, however, that even though there is an extensive existing road network across Saudi Arabia, air travel would still likely be the transport option of choice between some of the host cities and that this would still likely be carbon-intensive in 2034. To mitigate the impact, the bidder would focus on continued uptake of low-carbon mass transit systems; developing and promoting efficient public and shared transport solutions; as well as encouraging the use of public transport or of active and micro-transport options within cities. The bidder also commits to providing free public transport for ticket holders and people with tournament accreditation.

Saudi Arabia seeks to be one of the world's leading tourism destinations, while ensuring that the increase in tourism activity is managed in an environmentally conscious way, in accordance with its National Tourism Strategy (2019). The bidder provides relevant mitigation measures for accommodation, which include promoting sustainable building methods for construction and operations, sustainable building certifications, energy and emissions management, water conservation initiatives and promoting waste avoidance, segregation, reuse and recycling programmes.

With regards to energy consumption, the bidder outlines relevant mitigation measures that focus on energy efficient and renewable energy sources where possible. Reduction and focus on supporting a circular economy are the key mitigation measures in terms of waste management.

Furthermore, the bidder intends to explore additional initiatives to manage the environmental impacts of the tournament, including awareness-raising activities and event legacy planning to ensure local communities benefit from the stadiums after the competition, which would be important to ensure a lasting legacy from the tournament.




## Conclusion

The Saudi Arabia 2034 bid provides a good overall commitment to sustainability.

In terms of human rights, the undertaking involved in implementing the various measures outlined in the Human Rights Strategy, particularly in certain areas, could involve significant effort and time, giving rise to a risk rating in this regard which has been reflected in the assessment accordingly. However, the considerable work and level of concrete commitment demonstrated by the bid and its key stakeholders, together with the demonstrable rate of progress and the 10-year time horizon, are mitigating factors to consider, whilst there are also significant opportunities for the bid to contribute to wider positive human rights impacts in Saudi Arabia under the umbrella of the country's Vision 2030.

Whilst the extent of construction would have a material environmental impact, the bid provides a good foundation for delivering mitigation measures to address some of the environment-related challenges, in particular through the national legislative context, the commitment to work with FIFA to implement a sustainable event management system, sustainable building certification, the compact tournament footprint, the provision of free public transportation to ticket holders, the maximisation of the use of renewable energy in connection with the tournament, and by covering all areas outlined in the FIFA Sustainable Tournament Requirements.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Sustainability commitment	 Low	<p>The bidder makes an explicit commitment to sustainability, human rights, sustainable procurement, climate action and to complying with FIFA's sustainability requirements.</p> <hr/> <p>The bidder confirms its support for the Paris Agreement and for implementation of the ISO 20121 sustainability management system for events.</p> <hr/> <p>The bidder makes a clear commitment to stakeholder engagement.</p>
Human rights	 Medium	<p>Overall, the undertaking involved in implementing the various measures outlined in the Human Rights Strategy, particularly in certain areas, could involve significant effort and time, giving rise to a risk rating in this regard which has been reflected in the assessment accordingly.</p> <hr/> <p>However, the considerable work and level of concrete commitment demonstrated by the bid and its key stakeholders, together with the demonstrable rate of progress and the 10-year time horizon, are relevant mitigating factors to consider.</p> <hr/> <p>There is a good potential that hosting the competition could help contribute to positive human rights impacts in the context of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030.</p>
Environmental protection	 Low	<p>The bidder demonstrates an understanding of the impact of the tournament on the environment and climate and outlines a number of measures to mitigate this impact.</p> <hr/> <p>Whilst the scale and extent of construction work would have a material environmental impact, the bidder proposes using existing buildings and infrastructure where it is feasible. Together with the commitment to implement several sustainability initiatives in connection with the projects, as well as committing to achieving sustainable building certification, this could reduce the impact.</p> <hr/> <p>The multiple stadiums located in Riyadh and Jeddah would entail reduced inter-city travel. Air travel would still likely be the transport option of choice between some of the host cities when needed, which carries an impact on the tournament's environmental and carbon footprint. The planned further development of the transport infrastructure in the country, combined with the provision by the bidder of free public transportation for ticket holders would help mitigate that impact.</p>

### 5.3.7 LEGAL

The following assessment of the legal risks associated with the bid comprises an evaluation of the following two components:

- the government support documents; and
- the contractual legal framework

This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the methodology described in Annexe B of this report.

#### Evaluation

##### *Government support documents*

The Federation has provided the full suite of government support documents that demonstrate support from the relevant governmental authorities to host and stage the competition in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

As part of its submission, the Federation has submitted a government declaration executed collectively by the Minister of Environment, Water & Agriculture, the Minister of Sport, and the Minister of Finance, and the required seven government guarantees executed by the responsible ministries.

The content of the submitted government support documents generally complies with the FIFA templates, with the exception of a few material deviations.

As part of the dialogue process during the bid preparation phase of the bidding process, a side letter was discussed with FIFA which amends the government support documents to impose some consultation processes and to clarify the scope of any waiver of sovereign immunity in the documents. Given the proactive engagement on this matter and alignment between the parties, this side letter has been assessed as low risk to FIFA.

##### *Contractual legal framework*

The Federation has submitted a comprehensive set of agreements for the hosting and staging of the competition, including the following core agreements:

- a hosting agreement;
- five executed host city agreements and declarations; and
- 15 executed stadium agreements.

In addition, the Federation has also submitted a comprehensive set of supporting agreements, including airport agreements, training site agreements, venue agreements for the International Broadcast Centre and a significant number of accommodation agreements. A legal opinion confirming the enforceability of the agreements from a law firm of international repute was also submitted.

As part of the dialogue process during the bid preparation phase of the bidding process, a side letter was discussed with FIFA which amends the contractual hosting documents to impose some consultation processes and to clarify the scope of any waiver of sovereign immunity in the documents. Given the proactive engagement on this matter and alignment between the parties, this side letter has been assessed as low risk to FIFA.



Viewed together, this provides FIFA with a very good contractual legal framework to host the competition in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## Conclusion

Overall, the bid submitted by the Federation provides an extensive and generally compliant set of government support documents and contractual hosting documents, which creates a very good legal framework for the successful hosting of the competition. Where deviations have been made, these have been reviewed and are considered to be of low risk from a legal perspective.

On the basis of the above assessment, the legal risks in respect of the government support documents and contractual legal framework have both been assessed to be low.

## Risk assessment

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Legal: government support documents	 Low	<p>The government declaration, all government guarantees and a government legal statement were provided duly executed and for the most part without material deviations from the FIFA templates (and in some cases proactively aligned with FIFA as part of the bidding process).</p> <p>Where deviations have been made, these have been generally assessed as a low risk from a legal perspective.</p> <p>Overall, the respective government entities have provided FIFA with an extensive and generally compliant set of government support documents which creates a very good framework for the successful delivery of the competition.</p>
Legal: contractual legal framework	 Low	<p>The hosting agreement, all host city agreements, all host city declarations, all stadium agreements, all airport agreements, all training site agreements, all International Broadcast Centre venue agreements, and a substantial number of accommodation agreements were provided duly executed and for the most part without material deviations from the FIFA templates (and in some cases proactively aligned).</p> <p>As part of the dialogue process during the bid preparation phase of the bidding process, a side letter was discussed with FIFA which amends the hosting document to impose some consultation processes and to clarify the scope of any waiver of sovereign immunity in the documents. Given the proactive engagement on this matter and alignment between the parties, this side letter has been assessed as low risk from a legal perspective.</p> <p>Overall, the Federation and its stakeholders have provided an extensive and generally compliant set of contractual hosting documents which creates a very good legal framework for the successful hosting of the competition.</p>



### 5.3.8 COMPLIANCE

#### Evaluation

By way of introduction, the compliance assessment comprises two components: the first assessing the bid's compliance with the bidding process, and the second evaluating the potential compliance risks associated with delivering the tournament in the bidding country.

Regarding the first component, as part of the bidding process, FIFA requested (pursuant to the formal requirements and other terms of the Bidding Agreement) that the bidder provide various bidding documents including the bid book, bid questionnaires and hosting documents for the organisation of the FIFA World Cup 2034.

The bidder submitted its bidding documents in the required form by the 31 July 2024 deadline.

- Soft copies were received and uploaded onto the FIFA Bidding Platform;
- Originals were handed over to FIFA during the Bid Book Handover event in Paris.

Further documents were also received as part of the clarification process that took place during the evaluation phase of the bidding process. Along with the bidding documents, the bidder submitted the other required documents on time and in the proper form, including:

- Declaration of interest on 8 October 2023;
- Bidding Agreement on 23 November 2023;
- Declarations of Compliance for Member Association personnel and Bid Consultants engaged prior to the Bidding Agreement submission (various dates);
- Nomination by the bidder of their Bid Compliance and Ethics Officer, within two months after the Bidding Agreement Submission date.

Throughout the duration of the bidding process, FIFA received notice in relation to the bidder's promotional activities. In addition, FIFA received the written reports of the Bid Compliance and Ethics Officers, appointed by the bidder for the duration of the bidding process, which addressed the integrity of the bidder's involvement in the bidding process and the compliance with the Bid Rules of Conduct and generally recognised rules of good governance.

In the course of the working meetings and inspection visits to Saudi Arabia as part of the bidding process, a representative from BDO attended as the independent auditor. At the time that this report was finalised, no unethical behaviour during the entire process was observed by FIFA, nor were any issues raised by the FIFA Ethics Committee concerning the bidder. When it comes to the provision of gifts, the bidder is considered to have closely followed the strict rules and guidelines set out in the Bidding Agreement.

Regarding the second component of the compliance assessment, FIFA examined whether any relevant international economic sanctions or export controls applied to the bidding country, Saudi Arabia.

For context, economic sanctions and export controls cover a wide range of political and/or economic measures which are put in place by international, regional or state bodies with the aim of influencing the behaviour of a particular country's regime, as well as individuals or organisations suspected of involvement in terrorism, organised crime, or internal repression. The types of relevant measures put in place can vary widely, including financial restrictions, import-export restrictions and travel bans. If any international economic sanctions or export controls apply to the bidding country, FIFA would face challenges with respect to the provision and movement of funds or goods, which are essential to deliver an international tournament.

At the time this report was finalised, FIFA identified no relevant international economic sanctions in place against Saudi Arabia.

FIFA will work closely with the appointed host to develop and implement a robust compliance programme to ensure mitigation of all relevant compliance risks and to support the protection of the tournament’s integrity.

**Risk assessment**

Criterion	Level of risk	Observations / comments
Compliance	<div> <div></div> <div>Low</div> </div>	<p>At the time that this report was finalised, the bidder was assessed as having complied with the bidding process.</p> <hr/> <p>There are currently no relevant sanctions in place against Saudi Arabia.</p>













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**ANNEXES**

## A. SAUDI ARABIA 2034

### TECHNICAL EVALUATION SCORES

#### A1 Stadiums

Proposed stadium	Score	Meeting minimum requirements	Adjusted scores	Overall score
King Salman International Stadium, Riyadh (opening match/final)	4.3	✓	12.9*	4.1
Prince Mohammed bin Salman Stadium, Riyadh	4.0	✓	4.0	
King Fahad Sports City Stadium, Riyadh	4.0	✓	4.0	
King Abdullah Sports City Stadium, Jeddah	4.1	✓	4.1	
NEOM Stadium, NEOM	4.0	✓	4.0	
King Khalid University Stadium, Abha	4.0	✓	4.0	
Aramco Stadium, Al Khobar	4.0	✓	4.0	
Qiddiya Coast Stadium, Jeddah	4.1	✓	4.1	
Jeddah Central Development Stadium, Jeddah	4.1	✓	4.1	
King Abdullah Economic City Stadium, Jeddah	4.1	✓	4.1	
King Saud University Stadium, Riyadh	4.1	✓	4.1	
New Murabba Stadium, Riyadh	4.0	✓	4.0	
Prince Faisal bin Fahad Sports City Stadium, Riyadh	4.0	✓	4.0	
ROSHN Stadium, Riyadh	4.0	✓	4.0	
South Riyadh Stadium, Riyadh	4.1	✓	4.1	

\*In accordance with the approved scoring system for the technical evaluation of bids, a **triple-weighting** has been applied to this stadium, as it is proposed for both the opening match and the final of the FIFA World Cup 2034.

#### A2 Team and referee facilities

	Technical score	Overall score
Training sites	4.1	3.9
Hotels	3.6	

A3 Accommodation

Host city	FIFA core group accommodation	General accommodation	Average score	Adjusted score***
Abha	4.0	4.7	4.4	4.0
Al Khobar	4.1	5.0	4.6	4.1
Jeddah*	4.7	5.0	4.9	4.4
NEOM	3.1	5.0	4.1	3.7
Riyadh**	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.5
Overall score calculated by adding host city scores and dividing by the number of host cities			4.1	

\* Jeddah has been split into four (4) “cities” based on the number of proposed stadiums in the city; the average of these is shown.

\*\* Riyadh has been split into eight (8) “cities” based on the number of proposed stadiums in the city; the average of these is shown.

\*\*\* The scoring system stipulates that “In determining the applicable score for the core group and general public accommodation components of the accommodation evaluation, FIFA retains the discretion to adjust the score to factor in any of the following components which may also be relevant during tournament-time: (i) the proportional split of the star ratings of existing and planned properties, (ii) the degree/scale to which the infrastructure proposed is planned or existing, (iii) status of the accommodation contracts signed for the respective core groups, and (iv) any other functional elements required to service the relevant numbers of FIFA core groups and expected fans. Given that over 50% of the proposed hotel inventory is planned (i.e. not existing), but taking into consideration the 10-year lead-in time and the provision of accommodation agreements, a modest discount factor of 10% has been applied.

A4 Transport

Host city	International connectivity (40%)	International accessibility (60%)	Overall score
Abha	2.6	5.0	4.2*
Al Khobar	4.7		
Jeddah	4.7		
NEOM	2.4		
Riyadh	4.3		
Average score	3.7		

\* The scoring system stipulates that “In determining the applicable score for the international accessibility component of the Transport evaluation, FIFA retains the discretion to adjust the score to factor in any of the following components which may also be relevant to the operational capacity of the airport during tournament-time: (i) the proportional split between transiting and arriving passengers, (ii) the degree/scale to which the infrastructure proposed is planned or existing, and (iii) any other functional and/or logistical elements or infrastructure required to service the relevant number of passengers. Given that the scale of infrastructure proposed to be planned is extensive in terms of airport expansions and associated increases in forecast passenger capacities, but taking into consideration the 10-year lead-in time and the provision of airport agreements, a modest discount factor of 10% has been applied to the international accessibility sub-criteria.

## A5 IBC site scores

Proposed IBC site	Score	Overall score
Riyadh Exhibition and Conference Center, Riyadh	4.7	4.7
Qiddiya Creative District, Riyadh	4.7	

## A6 FIFA Fan Festival sites

Host city	Score	
Abha	3.8	
Al Khobar	3.7	
Jeddah	3.8	
NEOM	4.0	
Riyadh	4.1	
Overall score calculated by adding host city scores and dividing by the number of host cities		3.9

\*Two proposals were submitted for each host city; only the best option is included in the scoring.

## B. LEGAL BID EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### Purpose of the legal bid evaluation

The purpose of the legal bid evaluation is to provide a legal assessment of the contractual agreements and other documentation of a predominately legal nature that each bidder has submitted to FIFA as part of the bidding process, such as the government support documents and the various hosting-related agreements.

FIFA requested that each of the bidding member associations complete and submit these documents in the form provided to give FIFA a sufficient degree of assurance that the FIFA World Cup 2034 could be hosted and staged in the prospective host country (or countries) in the manner desired by FIFA. FIFA has allocated legal risk ratings to each bid based on the evaluation of this documentation and other applicable materials as described below.

This legal evaluation is not intended to be a comprehensive report on the overall legal environment of a prospective host country as it relates to the potential hosting of the FIFA World Cup 2034. Accordingly, the risk ratings may not reflect all legal considerations applicable to each bid.

### Scope of the legal bid evaluation

To prepare this legal evaluation, FIFA reviews the following materials:

- i. The documents submitted by the member association during the bidding process that were based on the templates provided by FIFA (“bidding documents”)
- ii. Any additional materials provided by the member association at the time of submission of its bid
- iii. Any information or materials provided by the member association after the submission of its bid in response to questions raised by FIFA during the bidding clarification process

FIFA has also taken into account those occasions when the member association either did not submit one or more of the bidding documents required by FIFA, or submitted one or more of the bidding documents in a form that was not compliant with FIFA’s requirements.

Further, when FIFA considered it appropriate for its legal evaluation, it reviewed publicly available resources to gather additional information about a prospective host country and its legal environment.

### Risk assessment criteria

FIFA has allocated legal risk ratings to each bid based on the number and degree of legal risks identified by FIFA. These legal risks generally fall within the following categories:

#### *Liability risks*

The bidding documents and associated materials submitted by the member association potentially expose FIFA to unanticipated liabilities. This may be the result of the member association failing to submit certain bidding documents (or failing to submit them in the form required by FIFA), or submitting supplemental materials that attempt to alter the terms of the bidding documents and/or impose legal obligations on FIFA. Please note that the legal evaluation does not attempt to assess the potential financial impact of these liabilities.

#### *Enforceability risks*

Based on the materials submitted (or not submitted) by the member association as part of its bid, FIFA may not be able to fully enforce or rely on the contractual terms of the bidding documents.



### *Operational delivery risks*

The materials submitted (or not submitted) by the member association as part of its bid impair FIFA's operational delivery model and requirements for the competition. This may be due to the member association submitting certain bidding documents with changes made to the terms required by FIFA. Please note that the legal evaluation does not attempt to assess the potential operational impact.

FIFA's allocated risk ratings may result from a single identified risk that FIFA considers particularly significant, or from the accumulation of a number of identified risks. Where FIFA considers that any such risks are reasonably capable of being mitigated, these potential mitigating factors are described and should be read in conjunction with the corresponding risk rating.





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